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The COMMUNIST

FEBRUARY

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ROBERT MINOR

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REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Congressional Outlook and Struggle of the Masses. Anti-Spending Cry Is Cover for Monopoly Sabotage. Can People's Gains Be Preserved Without Advancing? Road to Recovery Lies Through Curbing Big Business. Dying Capitalism and Monopoly Profits. Business Can Still Earn a Dollar. How to Fight for Jobs. Capital Investments and Nationalization of Banks. Dangers of Reactionary Demagogy on Economic Issues. John Garner Builds a New Middle. Lima Conference Made Important Beginning. Our Economic Relations With Latin America Present Many Problems. United States Must Orientate on Democratic Forces in Latin America. Imperialist Contradictions and Anti-Fascist Policies. Trotskyism in Latin America. Mooney's Freedom Is a Victory for the People. His Future Plans. The Daily Worker *on Its Sixteenth Year.*

JUDGING by the looks of things during the first few weeks of the Seventy-sixth Congress, the conclusion is inescapable that the masses of the people and their progressive organizations will have to fight, and fight hard, to protect what they have, and to consolidate the gains already made, using these as a basis for further advances. Moreover, as we shall try to prove further on, the question of advancing further the progressive cause of the people is not a matter of luxury or general desirability. It is a matter of life.

Many of the gains won by the masses in the past years, on the economic and political fields, will be extremely hard to maintain without thorough *consolidation;* and such consolidation will prove nearly impossible without further *advances.* This, it might be said, is true with respect to all gains made by the masses under capitalism. But it becomes most decisively true in a period like the present when the general crisis of the capitalist system continues to deepen, when within it an economic crisis continues to develop, and when out of it all grows and spreads an offensive of international fascism abroad and a revitalized offensive of pro-fascist reaction at home.

Within *such* a national and international setting, no progressive gains are likely to have much permanence or security unless followed up with consolidation and advance. In plainer language, it would mean that to stand still is to be forced back; and to be forced back in the present world situation is to be forced onto the path of fascism and war. Whatever else the majority of the American people may still lack complete unity on, or clarity, this majority is definitely opposed to the path of fascism. It remains therefore to be demonstrated to the masses of the people that, in order to avoid the path of fascism and war, they must *fight* for the consolidation and advance of the progressive gains. It is the task and duty of the forces of the

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democratic front to unite their efforts and to rally and lead the masses in this sort of fight. *Only thus will be achieved a united action for social and national security, for the struggle against the fascist aggressors and the pro-fascist monopolies.*

For the outstanding fact of the situation is that big business reaction, represented politically by the leadership of the Republican Party and by the reactionary Democrats, not only refuses to learn, not only fails to show the slightest readiness to abide by the will of the majority of the people, but —following the November elections— is unfolding an even wider offensive against the people. Trying to cover up its continued and persistent sabotage of the nation's economic recovery as well as its opposition to the nation's democracy and security, big business reaction once more beats the drums of opposition to government "spending and regulation," fraudulently blaming these for the economic crisis and unemployment.

It matters little to the spokesmen of reaction that these cries have been exploded and discredited many times before. It apparently also matters little to them, though it may be causing them some slight worry, that considerable sections of smaller and even middle business are becoming dubious of the genuineness and honesty of the reactionary cry against government spending and regulation. Certainly, it couldn't escape the attention of many of these business men that the government's relief and recovery program, adopted by the Seventy-fifth Congress last summer, against the opposition of the reactionaries in both parties, had a good deal to do with the temporary business improvement which took place. Big business reaction, notwithstanding all this, beats the old drums, and insists that it alone can give the country recovery and employment.

Continuing with the demagogic tricks of the last elections, Joseph W. Martin, minority leader of the House, declares in the name of the Republican delegation:

"The paramount objective is to restore the solid prosperity of the country—to put our 10,000,000 unemployed back to work. Permanent jobs at American wages are the only index of recovery." (*The New York Times,* January 3.)

This is presented in a fashion as though it were something new, or that his party was the first to discover it. He said, of course, nothing on how this is to be accomplished. Nor did he mention the fact that the Republican Governor of Michigan, Frank D. Fitzgerald, was recommending to the state legislature (at about the same time as Mr. Martin spoke) "a labor relations act" which aims to prevent labor from fighting for precisely this objective—"for permanent jobs at American wages." This is only one recent example of Republican Party sincerity. And here is another.

Commenting on the President's opening message to Congress, the *New York Herald Tribune,* the Republican paper which says it is for progress but against liberalism, undertakes to enlighten its readers on the problem of recovery as follows:

"The truth of recovery is so obvious that the President has difficulty in concealing it beneath his bright new words. Capital and manpower can be brought together by main force (under a dictatorship) or by encouragement (in a democracy). There is no other way, and the most ominous fact in the

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President's speech is that he refuses to face this dilemma, and, while decrying the evils of dictatorship, does nothing to lessen the enormous uncertainties overhanging capital as the result of uncontrolled government spending, now to be renewed and expanded." (January 5.)

This is really enlightening, especially the *Herald Tribune's* conception of democracy. In a democracy, says this progressive-but-not-liberal Republican mouthpiece, capital and labor power are brought together "by encouragement." Fine. By encouraging labor? By offering it permanency of job, security from unemployment, adequate wages, reasonable hours, freedom of organization and collective bargaining, insurance against disability and old age, a voice in the affairs of the nation? No, not at all. This is not the Republican conception of encouragement. Labor, according to this conception, needs no encouragement, presumably on the assumption that, when there are over eleven million unemployed in the country, the worker will be forced to take any old job, under any conditions. And should he perchance refuse to do so, he can be "encouraged" by the police and militia the way Hoover was encouraging the bonus marchers to give up the demand for the bonus.

By encouraging perhaps *both* labor and capital, as President Roosevelt is trying? No, that is not the Republican Party idea either. When it comes to encouragement, it is capital alone—big capital—that is in need of it. Poor, suffering big capital. But if this is what democracy has to do to bring capital and labor together, *what and where is the difference between it and fascism?*

There is not the slightest doubt that "enormous uncertainties" overhang capital. But these do not result from government spending. More real and more enormous uncertainties overhang labor, the farmers, the middle classes, all of whom are robbed and exploited by big capital, though these are in part beneficiaries of government spending. Therefore, all of these "uncertainties," which affect variously different classes, must stem from some other source. They stem in fact from the crisis of capitalism as a system. And all of these uncertainties are made more painful for the nation precisely by the offensive of the reactionary monopolies at home and by the offensive of international fascism abroad.

* * *

NOTING the fact that "business seeks security in these times rather than being venturesome," the *Business Bulletin* of the Cleveland Trust Company thinks it has found the explanation for it in "two changes" which have taken place since 1930. They are:

". . . the chance of success in business is only about 50 per cent as great as it used to be, while the rewards of the successful are about 80 per cent as great as they were formerly." (December 15, 1938.)

Which probably indicates a real downward trend for business chances as a whole. But this lumping together of big business with medium and little business creates a distorted picture. And in these important respects that, while little business is doing much *worse* than the above analysis indicates, big business is doing much *better*. The latter point is demon-

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strated convincingly by an analysis of the earnings data for an identical group of 168 industrial corporations collected by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York since 1928. On the basis of such an analysis Mr. Leigh S. Plummer reaches the following conclusions:

"Earnings of these concerns dropped at a rate of $26,900,000 per point of decline of the Federal Reserve Board's readjusted index of industrial production from 1929 through 1932. Earnings of the same companies increased at a rate of $23,950,000 for each point gain in industrial production from 1932 through 1937. The difference between the drop per point of industrial production change and the gain per point on the upside of the depression was $2,950,000 or approximately 11 per cent." (*Wall Street Journal.*)

Not so bad, is it? And this seems also to be the opinion of Mr. Plummer in the *Wall Street Journal,* stated in these words:

"Ability of large industrial corporations to earn a dollar has been bent a bit, but not broken by events of the last six years." (*Ibid.*)

And forgetting what the editors say editorially to the contrary, this spokesman of Wall Street gives Mr. Plummer's article the following head: "Industry Still Has Strong Earning Ability Despite Handicaps of Heavier Tax Burdens, Uneven Labor Conditions Imposed Since 1929."

Remember: it is the large industrial corporations that this refers to. It is the opportunities of finance capital which even this defender of its privileges describes as only "bent a bit" but by no means "broken." And, we should add, a very tiny bit. And yet it is precisely from the reactionary circles of finance capital that the main reactionary drive comes to reduce still further the standard of living of the masses and to force them into it by the terroristic methods of fascism.

According to Leon Henderson, former W.P.A. economist, there were in this country during October, 1938, —10,569,000 unemployed. In the same month, the Federal Reserve Board's index of industrial production reached 96 per cent of the 1923-25 average. That is, while production was only 4 per cent below what is now considered "normal," there were still nearly eleven million workers unable to find jobs in private employment. In November the production index reached 103 of this "normal," but unemployment remained practically stationary. Why does not big business, which controls the nation's economy and dominates directly the heavy industries, go to work and provide employment for the jobless? The *Wall Street Journal* says that big business is still able "to earn a dollar" despite heavier taxation. Why not go ahead and earn it?

Comparing the average yearly investments in capital goods between the two four-year periods, 1926-29 and 1932-35, *The New York Times* (another spokesman of big business) laments the fact that in the latter:

". . . the expenditures on capital goods had fallen, in other words, to less than a third of the previous level, making a difference of almost $10,000,000,000 a year." (December 30, 1938.)

The explanation for this fact is not difficult to find. The years 1926-29, during which capital investments in America were approaching a yearly average of about nineteen billion dollars, were years of relative capital-

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ist stabilization. That's why the recovery phase of the economic cycle had reached the proportions it did. But already in 1927-28, as Comrade Stalin had pointed out at the time, the very growth of capitalist production and investments during the stabilization years was immensely sharpening all the inherent contradictions of the system, thus preparing the ground for the break-up of this stabilization and for a deep-going economic crash. In fighting against Lovestoneism, the Communist Party was seeking to prepare itself as well as the American people for this coming change.

What happened since the 1929 crash is perhaps more widely remembered. We had over three years of deep (the deepest) economic crisis lasting until around the middle of 1932, with Hoover in power, and then the beginning of the depression phase of the cycle (a leveling out of the decline). The years 1932-35, which the *Times* chooses to contrast with the years of "prosperity," were years of depression, the depression phase of the economic cycle. Quite naturally, production and capital investments would be in a very depressed state. But that is not all. The depression of these years was *not an ordinary one,* not a normal one. It was, as Comrade Stalin pointed out in 1934, "a depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry."

The reasons for this are the deepening of the general crisis of the capitalist system (while socialism in the Soviet Union was growing and gaining), the break-up of the temporary capitalist stabilization, the rise of the world offensive of fascism, the sharpening of all imperialist contradictions, and the unfolding of the anti-fascist struggles of the masses. The drop of ten billions in the average yearly capital investment during 1932-35 as compared with 1926-29 is largely a reflection of the fact that the former four years were years of a *special* kind of depression followed by a *special* kind of recovery. We say, largely but not totally. Because a serious contributing factor to this drop in capital investments, especially since 1935, was the growing economic and political sabotage of big business. It was this sabotage that hastened the outbreak of the economic crisis in 1937 and which is retarding the development of the business improvement that started in the summer of 1938.

The New York Times advises the administration to try to answer the question "why are the nation's enterprisers not spending an average of $19,000,000,000 a year, with a view to their future benefit, as they used to?" Well, we don't know exactly what the administration would answer. Very likely, it will overlook the *basic* causes and will almost certainly shrink from drawing all the conclusions from these causes. Yet this has to be done. The basic causes are the general crisis of the capitalist system, its inability to work as of old in the "normal" and "ordinary" way, and the sabotage of big business which is part of the general reactionary and pro-fascist offensive. And, to draw only the immediate practical conclusions from that, it is now fully evident that special and extraordinary measures are necessary to protect the masses and to enable them to live. It means fighting for *jobs, security, democracy and peace.*

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It is the struggle of a united people, headed by the working class, for social and national security.

Can this struggle be promoted effectively without curbing the economic and political power of the monopolies, of finance capital, of big business? No, it cannot. The solution of the economic problems of jobs, decent wages, a secured income for the farmers and middle classes, calls at the present time for large-scale capital investments. But finance capital, which *controls* the flow of capital investments, directly and indirectly, not only continues to sabotage, but is now unfolding a new offensive against the people and against the government. Therefore, to open the flow of capital investments, it is absolutely necessary *to loosen the hold* of finance capital upon the sources and instruments of such investments. This means the nationalization of the banking system of the country as well as the nationalization of the railroads and the munitions industries.

These are not reforms for reforms' sake which can be postponed until recovery is achieved and everybody has a job at decent wages. No, that is not the case now at all. If jobs, recovery, democracy and peace—if the struggle for these objectives within the confines of capitalism could be promoted effectively without nationalizing the banks and railroads, there might be no reason why we should advocate such measures. But the truth is *it cannot be done* in the present world. The last several years have amply demonstrated that fact. And pro-fascist reaction in this country appreciates this fact perhaps better than certain elements in the democratic front.

Pro-fascist reaction figures like this: the democratic front forces seem to hesitate to press for the nationalization of the banks and railroads. As long as that hesitation prevails, the democratic forces will not be able to provide a recovery satisfactory to the people. Hence, the people will grow confused and demoralized. In such an envisioned situation, pro-fascist demagogues (or fascist) will step in and take charge and precisely by promising recovery, "normal" and "ordinary," and dangling before the eyes of the masses all sorts of nationalization schemes. *A foretaste* of this demagogy we already have in the championship of normal recovery by the Republican Party as against the relief and scarcity economy of the New Deal.

We had this demagogy in the attempts of Phil LaFollette, which demagogy, though dormant, is not dead. We have it in the demagogic ravings against the bankers by the fascist priest, Coughlin, which must not be ignored. We have it growing on all sides and we must not let it come to fruition.

It should be clear, therefore, that in order to preserve the gains already made in the vital matters of relief, public works, farm legislation, banking regulations, etc., *these must be made more adequate and consolidated.* But it must also be made clear that only a policy which is consciously orientated towards the nationalization of the banks, railroads and munitions industries can make more adequate and consolidated the progressive gains now held by the American people.

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JOHN N. GARNER, Vice-President of the United States, has been talked about in the press a good deal lately, although he has not been much before the public eye himself. What he really thinks of public issues, the people have to infer indirectly from signs and gestures. But it seems to be pretty well established that he is now engaged in considerable political activity. On which, we should like for the moment to make only this comment. If a Vice-President has to be politically active, it would be desirable that the people be given a chance to learn the nature of these activities in a more direct way. Say, the Vice-President himself speaking out every now and then.

We are told, for example, that Mr. Garner is really not a reactionary die-hard but a mild and agreeable "middle-of-the-roader." This is certainly strange news. It somehow does not fit with the prevailing and well-substantiated impression that Mr. Garner has been and is an opponent of President Roosevelt's New Deal policies, which, by the President's own definition, are "middle-of-the-road." Or, does Mr. Garner believe that the President is no longer in the middle?

Of course, the "middle-of-the-road" is not and cannot be always fixed and stationary. One reason is that the political road itself is not fixed and stationary. When the road turns to the left, the "middle," if it wants to remain a middle, must also shift in the same direction. Another reason is that the political meaning of "middle-of-the-road" at the present time is a position of vacillation between pro-fascist reaction and consistent anti-fascist democracy. Vacillating, so to speak, both ways. This being the case, we find it difficult to accept the current gossip about Mr. Garner's "middle-of-the-roadedness." For it is well known that Mr. Garner has consistently vacillated *away* from democracy and *toward* pro-fascist reaction, vacillating only one way.

It is quite possible, therefore, that we are dealing here with a *tactical* attempt on the part of the Vice-President to construct artificially a new "middle." We say, artificially, because it cannot be done in any other way. The intent of this tactic would seem to be to take away from the President his present virtual monopoly of the "middle-of-the-road," thus forcing him either to capitulate to the Garner elements in the Democratic Party or else abandon the "middle."

But this is more easily said than done. It rests upon a false and non-realistic evaluation of the meaning of the results of the last elections in November. It wrongly assumes that the people's verdict in those elections was in favor of moving to the Right. Hence, it concludes that the road of government policy has to be shifted to the Right. Which would mean, if we grant these assumptions, that the middle too must be shifted to the Right and that there is real political basis for constructing such a line. But these assumptions are largely wishful and muddled thinking. The incontestable fact is that the farmers, middle classes and old people who voted Republican in November, voted in their mass against, not the New Deal objectives, but the inadequate and inconsistent realization of these objectives. Let this sink into the minds of the constructors of new "middles." Because it gives the lie squarely to all

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assertions that the mass of the people want to move to the Right, and exposes clearly the fact that there is no basis among the people and in their desires for any new "middles" in the direction of the Right.

In the Republican Party too there are plenty of tacticians trying to construct such a "middle." Representatives Barton from New York, for example. Speaking recently before a New York County Republican Committee meeting, Mr. Barton had this to say:

> "In so far as the reforms of the past six years are sound, they have ceased to be political issues. We, no less than the Democrats, are determined to maintain the rights of collective bargaining, social security, insurance of bank deposits and the proper regulation of the security exchange. These measures should be administered and can be administered, so as to achieve what our opponents have failed to achieve—steady employment and an expanding national income."

But is it true that these reforms have ceased to be political issues? To say that it is true would mean to assume that, for example, the right of collective bargaining is already fully secure and that there is nothing further to be done to protect that right and to make it real for all workers. But this is manifestly not so. Big business reaction is continually plotting to undermine and destroy the National Labor Relations Act and is doing so in Congress with the help of Barton's own party, at this very time. It would mean to assume further that social security is a reality for the mass of the American people. Which is manifestly a bad joke, if not worse. It would mean additionally to assume that the securities exchange is already properly regulated or that bank deposits are really and permanently secure. Which is nonsense because none of these problems can be solved with any degree of thoroughness without nationalizing the banking system. What we have today in the reforms that are already on the statute books is just a beginning, an approach. Therefore, these reforms are today just as vital political issues as they ever were. And this is true also because the workability and perfection of these reforms demand that they be *extended, deepened, further developed.* And this means *advancing forward* on the road of progressive legislation, not standing still and being pushed backward.

This has to be done precisely for the purpose of making the existing reforms (which, Barton claims, are no longer political issues) achieve "steady employment and an expanding national income." Not by giving the monopolies more leeway than they already have, but by curbing their powers economically and politically, can the American people move effectively towards steady employment, an expanded national income, security, democracy and peace.

This is the *central* political issue in which all the other more specific issues are tied up. In the last analysis, the position of various political groups and tendencies in the country will be determined not by what they arbitrarily choose to call themselves but by their actual attitude on this issue. Judged from this standpoint, the new Garner "middle" is plainly an attempt to force the Roosevelt administration and the Democratic Party to abandon the New Deal policies and objectives. It is an attempt to make the govern-

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ment capitulate to big business reaction. And from the same standpoint, Barton's "progressivism" amounts to the same thing, except that the latter maneuvers in the Republican Party whereas Garner operates in the Democratic Party. Considering the different relationships of forces in the two parties, the inner-party tactics of the Garner and Barton tendencies respectively are and will be different. But their political essence as at present manifest would seem to be very much alike.

President Roosevelt has indicated in his opening message to Congress, and subsequently in his Jackson Day speech, the central character of the task of solving the economic problems of the people hand in hand with resisting fascist aggression. To make these messages a truly effective platform of struggle for the social and national security of the American people, and to counter effectively the new Garner "middle," this major idea must underlie all practical policies: *the economic and political power of the monopolies—the fountain head of pro-fascism at home and of capitulation to fascism abroad—this power must be curbed.*

The growing forces of the democratic front, and in the first place labor, have the vital and serious task of uniting and leading the majority of the people along this path, the only path to jobs, security, democracy and peace.

* * *

It is quite true that the Eighth Pan-American Conference did not produce that complete consolidation and unity of the Americas against the fascist aggressors which is necessary and desirable. Possibly, more could have been accomplished along these lines in Lima. But as much as has been achieved is of the greatest positive value both for the unification of the Americas against the fascist aggressors and for the further promotion of the movements of the Latin American peoples for their national independence.

There is much to substantiate this point of view on the results of Lima. And the violent, almost hysterical, reaction against the conference by fascism everywhere, but especially German fascism, is perhaps the most spectacular indication that the conference was moving in the right direction.

The task now is to follow it up, economically and politically.

On the economic side, the United States faces a condition in Latin America which presents several serious problems. It is well known, for example, that all our neighbors to the south are largely producers of agricultural and raw material products. As far as their exports go, many of them are either mono or duo-cultural agrarian countries. Some of their exportable goods, the United States needs for its own economy; while with other of their products (wheat, cotton, cattle, meat), this country itself competes on the world market. This condition is most outstanding in the case of Argentina. This, one might say, is a contradiction inherent in capitalist economy at its present stage, a contradiction made sharper and more insoluble by the fact that the economy of the United States is dominated by finance imperialist capital. Yet much can be done by the American people

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to meet these economic difficulties in a democratic and anti-fascist way. Especially so as there is another contradiction operating at the present time, much sharper and much more dominating in the situation. It is the contradiction between international fascism, on the one hand, and the peoples—all peoples—of the Americas, on the other.

The central fact in the situation is precisely this contradiction. It is the fact that German fascism and its allies are reaching out after the raw material, food and strategic bases of Latin America for the second imperialist war which they have already begun. This obviously carries the most serious threat to the national independence of the Latin American countries and to the national security of the United States as well as to the peace and democracy of the world. This fact is incontestable and only the superclever Republican *Herald Tribune* could see here a boxing "with shadows."

For the Latin American peoples, it is the major task of the present time to resist the penetration of the fascist aggressors in order to carry forward their national liberation struggles, to establish and develop democracy in their countries, in order to save their nations from destruction by fascism. For the United States, it is the vital task of protecting its national security which is indissolubly tied up with the promotion of the social security of the American people. And this is where and how the interests of the Latin American countries and of our country *meet and coincide,* making necessary and possible a common fight against the fascist aggressors. For this fight, the United States needs the collaboration of the Latin American countries and the Latin American countries need ours. This is the true democratic and anti-fascist basis upon which Pan-American relationships must be built.

From such a basis, the economic problems arising from our relations with Latin America can find certain mutually satisfactory solutions. It is, for example, generally understood that this country stands ready to make certain concessions to the Latin Americans in the matter of tariffs. This policy will have to be continued and further developed. But this is not all. The United States is vitally interested in the development of broad *home markets* in the Latin American countries for the goods of their own industries as well as ours. This may not be in the interests of our economic royalists and monopolists who come down to those countries to squeeze out of them all there is and take it away. But then the interests of the monopolies are not the interests of the American people and nation. Our nation wants prosperous and democratic neighbors for the sake of its own prosperity and democracy. Specifically, this means: we should help, certainly not obstruct, all efforts of the Latin Americans to diversify their agriculture, which means helping them to carry through substantial agrarian reforms (land and implements to the peasants); it means also helping them, certainly not obstructing, to develop their native industries. So long as we pursue a truly democratic and anti-fascist policy in Latin America, a *consistent* good neighbor policy, the industries and agriculture of the United

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States will benefit greatly from assisting such progressive economic developments in those countries. And, conversely, only by following such an economic policy will we really succeed in building the continental solidarity against the fascist aggressors.

The spokesmen of Wall Street, of the reactionary monopolies, are naturally opposed to such a policy. They say it is against the interests of the United States. But, then, these same monopolies tell us that social security for the American people is also against the interests of the United States. And so we find that it has become necessary *to curb* the powers of these monopolies in order to promote the well being of the masses of the American people and of America. Similarly with our relationships to Latin America. In order that we should be able to strengthen our good neighborly ties with those countries on a truly democratic basis, it has become necessary to curb the powers of the same reactionary monopolies *wherever they operate in the Latin American countries.* The ways of these monopolies are imperialist and antidemocratic. They run contrary to the interests of America. They must therefore be *checked and curbed.*

From this follow certain political policies. Just as in our own country, so similarly in the Latin American countries a great fight takes place between the forces of democracy and the forces of reaction and fascism. The forces of democracy are the peoples: the workers, peasants, intellectuals and middle classes. These are the forces that are struggling to liberate their nations, to build up the well being and prosperity of their peoples. And these are the forces that are resisting fascist penetration and are seeking the collaboration of the American people and of the United States. On the other hand, the forces of reaction are the big landowners and slave drivers, also some of the native commercial and financial agents of foreign monopolies, also the well-entrenched agencies of German and Italian fascism, pro-fascist military circles and the reactionary elements of the higher church hierarchy. The picture is not the same in all countries, of course, but such is the line-up in the main.

From the standpoint of our national interests, which demand the successful working of our good neighbor policy, the question is: upon which of these forces in Latin America must the United States orientate? Clearly, upon the forces of the peoples of Latin America and their democracy. Because: in many countries these forces are either in power or are coming to power; in all Latin American countries the future belongs to them; they are the ones who want our collaboration and can be depended on to stand with us shoulder to shoulder against the fascist aggressors. Basing itself upon *these* forces, the American people will be able to proceed with greater ease and success to rally *all* Latin American countries in a strong continental solidarity against the fascist aggressors. Thus a tremendous power will be created for collaboration with all peace forces of the world for peace and democracy.

And this is what fascism fears. And because fascism fears these developments, its Trotskyite and Lovestoneite agents have been and are particularly

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active in various Latin American movements seeking to divert them from the fight against fascism to a fight against the United States. Under the catchword of Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda minister, that "Yankee imperialism is the main enemy," the Trotskyites and Lovestoneites are trying to shield their fascist masters, hoping thus to demoralize certain of the weaker elements of the anti-fascist movements in Latin America.

The fascist press in Germany (and in Italy and Japan) maintains that they have no designs on Latin America except "peaceful" trade; that the fascist danger in the Americas is "an invention of American imperialism." The Trotskyites do not even change the wording: they use the same stuff. Equally important is the fact that such a staunch defender of the interests of the American *imperialist monopolies* as Herbert Hoover says the same things as Hitler (and his Trotskyite spies) though in different words. Hoover too says that there is no fascist danger in Latin America; that the whole thing is an invention of the President to frighten the American people into supporting the New Deal. And so, we have this line-up: international fascism together with its Trotsky-Lovestone agents, followed by the most authoritative spokesmen of the imperialist monopolies of the United States (Hoover) are marching under the banner that there is no fascist danger in Latin America. Only Hitler-Trotsky adds that this danger is an invention of American imperialism while Hoover says that it was invented by the New Deal.

This is on one side. On the other is the working class, the farmers, the middle classes—all democratic and progressive forces of the Americas—getting together to resist the real fascist danger, to protect the national security of their peoples, to promote the national liberation of the small nations, to promote and develop democracy. This is the real line-up of forces. Is it not evident from this alone that the first is the camp of imperialism and imperialist war, of fascism and capitulation to fascism? And is it not equally evident that the second is the camp of anti-fascism, of struggle against imperialism and against the second imperialist war which international fascism is already waging? It is fully evident.

What is taking place in the world and in the Americas today is this. The second imperialist war, which fascism is already waging in China, Spain and Ethiopia and for whose extension the fascist powers seek to get hold of the raw materials, food and strategic bases of Latin America —this imperialist war (surely a reality, not an invention) arises *basically* from the *imperialist contradictions* of the capitalist system at this stage. Rivalries and contradictions between the big imperialist powers: between Germany and England, Germany and the United States, Italy and England, Italy and France, Germany and France, Japan and England, Japan and the United States. But this second imperialist war has this peculiarity (and many others) that it is so far "a one-sided" war: the fascist powers attack while the imperialist circles of the opponent countries (England, France, the United States) retreat, "conciliate," "appease," capitulate, following a policy of allying

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themselves with the fascist aggressor *against their own peoples and nations* as well as against the smaller countries and the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. These are facts which no one can honestly dispute. But this is not the only thing happening in the world. Fortunately.

As against the fascist offensive, and the capitulation-alliance policies of the imperialist circles of the bourgeoisie of the democratic countries, there rises and develops a movement of the peoples themselves—workers, farmers, middle classes—resisting the fascist offensive and combatting the capitulation policies of the reactionary imperialist circles of their own bourgeoisie. Spain and China have given us the example. Whole peoples and nations threatened by fascism are moving towards resistance to fascist aggression. The Soviet Union, by its socialist power, peace policies and firm dealing with the aggressors, is the greatest source of strength and encouragement to all anti-fascist fighters.

Thus we have a second imperialist war waged by Germany, Italy and Japan threatening all nations and peoples. The imperialist circles of the bourgeois-democratic countries against whose interests this war is directed and whose capitulation policies have enabled fascism to begin it —these imperialist circles are now trying to meet the war by entering into counter-revolutionary alliances with the fascist aggressors. This only encourages and strengthens the fascists for bigger aggressions. And so the imperialist war continues "one-sided." *But at the same time, the workers and peoples and whole countries are rising to meet this imperialist war in a democratic and anti-fascist way.*

And this is also what is happening in the Americas. It is happening thus because the class interests of the proletariat of the Americas, the vital interests of the toiling masses of these countries and the national interests of all their peoples *merge and coincide* in a common interest to resist the fascist offensive.

To achieve this common aim the working people of the Latin American countries are engaged in the serious task of eliminating fascism and combatting the reactionaries *in their own countries.* Similarly, the workers and all progressive forces in the United States have the task of combatting reaction in our country and of *insuring the continuation and improvement of the good neighbor policy.*

It is clear that the fulfillment of these tasks requires a relentless struggle against the Trotsky-Lovestone agents of the fascist aggressors both here and in Latin America. The more active fascism becomes, the more dangerous become its Trotskyite spies.

There is no doubt that the two national conventions of our brother Parties—the Communist Parties of Mexico and Cuba—held in their countries during the month of January will contribute materially toward the above ends. These parties, and our brother Party in Chile, to mention only these, have already demonstrated that they can contribute significantly to the national liberation of their peoples and to the strengthening of anti-fascist continental solidarity.

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TOM MOONEY'S freedom is of course a victory and triumph for himself, for his courage, his unfaltering devotion to the cause of the masses, his unflagging faith in his class and people. It is also a victory and triumph for the working class of America which has come to play such an important role in the life of the nation. It is a victory for the whole camp of progress and democracy whose advance made the freeing of Mooney possible. It is a promise of greater victories to come, victories for the American people.

Our Party has already expressed its joy and happiness, together with all friends of labor and progress. And this joy has been greatly enhanced by Tom Mooney's brief statement to the press on his future plans. He said:

"My plans, at the moment, are, first, to seek the freedom of Billings, my co-worker, co-defendant, and co-sufferer; secondly, to work for the unity of the A. F. of L., C.I.O. and the railway brotherhoods; and, third, to prevent fascism from taking hold in America."

Nothing could say it better than these few lines. It is a program of work and life which is near and dear to the labor movement and its progressive allies. It is a program whose realization will make sure that the American people and democracy will win for good.

All power to you, Tom Mooney, in the realization of these plans!

* * *

OUR *Daily Worker* is now going on its sixteenth year. While growing more mature, as is natural, the *Daily Worker* is also becoming ever more vigorous, youthful and effective in the great causes of the American working class and people. And because of that, it is also serving our Party better. A really indispensable instrument for education, organization and struggle.

None of us will want to fall into a mood of complacency. But a feeling of pride is legitimate on the part of the Party and its numerous friends. After all it was—and still is—no easy job. Great difficulties had to be met and overcome during the fifteen years of the life of the *Daily Worker*. Difficulties of all sorts: material, organizational, ideological. But the Party and its friends met these difficulties, establishing in these years an institution that is coming to be recognized by all progressive forces, not alone by our Party, as of the greatest value and importance. An institution which is also making its own special contribution to the rich store of progressive American journalism.

The people who in the course of years have made the *Daily Worker* and those who are making it today—the *Daily Worker* staff—deserve particular recognition and this the Party has extended to them.

Yet the greatest recognition that can be given to the staff of our central organ is a greater and truly *mass circulation*. This is still the unsolved task, first, of the Communist Party organizations and then of all friends of the *Daily Worker*. The sixteenth year of the life of our paper should see a sizable addition to its readers, a more systematic use of its material for the educational and organizing campaigns of our movements and a further improvement in the form and content of its own columns.

Our Party is growing and so is its

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press. In January there appeared the first issue of a new Party magazine, *National Issues,* devoted especially to political-legislative problems and activities. But we must grow faster. Therefore, in congratulating the Party and the *Daily Worker* staff on the fifteenth anniversary of our central organ, there is one idea that should be uppermost in our minds: *Build the circulation of the* Daily Worker.

A. B.

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LENIN—HIS MEANING FOR US TODAY*

BY ROBERT MINOR

THE struggle against war is a *modern* phenomenon. The *possibility* of banishing war from the earth came about only with the birth of the movement for, and the perspective of, scientific socialism; for, prior to that, every form of society of which men had knowledge had *contained* war within it as a historic necessity; and dreams of enduring peace could then be hardly more than dreams of a heaven after death, or of a primitive utopia almost equally unreal.

The forces that could make possible peace between nations were, and could be, organized only by the modern movement of labor guided by the Marxian perspective of socialism.

It is, therefore, not an accident that the greatest leader of the first decisive struggle for socialism—Lenin—was also the greatest leader of the struggle against war.

It was Lenin who, on a world scale, led, and led successfully, the fight against war in the greatest crisis and slaughter the world ever knew, in 1914-1918. Among all the Socialist Parties of the world that had pledged themselves at the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart in 1907 and at Basel in 1912 to fight with every effective means against the oncoming world imperialist war—only *one,* the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin, carried out that promise effectively, consistently and fully. This historic fact is the proudest badge of honor of Bolsheviks.

The success of the fight that Lenin led against war was greater than any other success ever yet attained by the democratic forces of civilization against barbaric militarism. In all history there is no deed that was ever done for peace, equal to the Bolshevik Party's leadership of the masses in "disarming" the most barbarous militarist autocracy of the modern world through winning from tsarism and the imperialist bourgeoisie the leadership of a twelve million strong army, stopping the imperialist war on the Eastern front and turning the huge force of 160,000,000 people to the path of peace and socialism.

Upon this unexampled tradition we Communists stand, and we make no concessions, nor do we retract or weaken by one syllable that magnificent program of struggle against war; it stands for us, not as a dead page of history, but as a living guide by which again and again, and yet again, the victory of peace against war, of civilization against militarist barbar-

* This is the second and concluding section of Comrade Minor's article, the first part of which appeared in the January issue. —*The Editors.*

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ism, of democracy against imperialism, of socialism against slavery, will be won.

We repeat the emphasis—that it is a *living* guide, and not transformed into a dead formula.

The magnificent struggle of the Bolsheviks against the war *was not a blind following of a dogma* of opposition to all war in general. Let no man imagine that the achievements of Lenin were made through the use of a dead and "petrified orthodoxy" of dogma—by a set of rules (we might as well say incantations) which need only to be learned by heart and applied, come what may, to all situations. For Lenin, "Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action." And, *using* this guide to action, and in accord with "the necessity of an historical study of each war individually," Lenin concluded that: *"The present war is an imperialist war.* This is its main characteristic." *

It was on the basis of this analysis that the Party of Lenin and Stalin, declaring that "a revolutionary class in a reactionary war cannot but 'wish the defeat of its government,'" began the great action that produced the only permanently decisive results that came out of the World War.

Why is it necessary to recall this today? Because today the *agents provocateurs* of Hitler and Mussolini and the Japanese Hitlers raise the cry "defeat your own government!"—not in Rome, Tokyo or Berlin, but in *Catalonia,* to break the Spanish republican line for the fascist armies, and in China to aid the Japanese invasion—and foremost among these *provocateurs* is the same corrupt adventurer Trotsky, now revealed as a police spy of the German government for the past eighteen years!

Lenin, with his Party, was the organizer of the international opposition to the war, the international leader and teacher of those *national* leaders who sprang up in all countries to rally the working class away from support of the imperialists. Karl Liebknecht's voice rang out in the Reichstag with the anti-war call of revolutionary socialism, clarified best of all by Lenin. The Russian name of Lenin's Party became a word in the languages of all nations signifying the bravest struggle against war. The old fighter Eugene V. Debs was taken to prison with the words on his lips: "From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet—I am a Bolshevik!" Thus also were inspired Charles E. Ruthenberg and Earl Browder, Wm. D. Haywood and a host of others whose names are known as the leaders who were imprisoned for their struggle against war.

ON THE THEORY THAT "THERE CAN BE NO MORE NATIONAL WARS"

But among the leading figures of the revolutionary struggle against the war, there were many who made errors which Lenin foresaw could lead to disastrous consequences. Among these errors notably was that of opposing the war blindly, on dogmatic grounds, and therefore leaving oneself and one's class open to manipulation and defeat by the warmakers. This was the case of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XVIII, International Publishers, New York p. 68.

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famous "Junius" pamphlet against the war, which was written by Rosa Luxemburg, using the name "Junius," and issued in Germany secretly in 1915. In this pamphlet, despite its fine spirit, Luxemburg made the dangerous error of concluding that in the imperialist epoch *there could not be any wars other than wars imperialistic on both sides,* as in the case of the World War then raging.

It was the continuation of an old wrong attitude on Luxemburg's part, and that of her associates, on the subject of national struggles for liberation. Lenin saw instantly that in the further development of the war and in a changed situation this error would lead to disastrous consequences.

What consequences? Very clearly, the consequences which the fascist agents are striking for *today,* when the hideous fascist reaction wages war against *Spain* and *China* and *Ethiopia,* and the agents of fascism are not lacking who tell us—not as an honest mistake, but as the work of well-paid provocateurs—that we are in error in defending Spain and China, that these republics are not engaged in struggles for national liberation, but are "imperialist" and that there is no reason to fight for Ethiopia against fascist conquest, that "there are no national wars" of liberation possible now.

The error of the "Junius" pamphlet was contained in the following passage:

> "In the era of this unbridled imperialism *there can no longer be any national wars.* National interests serve only as an instrument of deceit so as to give the toiling masses of the people over to the service of their deadly enemy—imperialism." (My emphasis—*R. M.*)

While rejoicing at the appearance "at last" of a revolutionary anti-war pamphlet in Germany, Lenin nevertheless sharply attacked the error contained in it, saying:

> "It is possible that the denial [in the pamphlet] of national wars in general is either an oversight or an accidental exaggeration in the course of emphasizing the quite correct idea that the *present* war is imperialist and not national. But, since the reverse is also possible, since an erroneous denial of *all* national wars is to be noticed among various Social-Democrats as a consequence of the false presentation of the *present* war as national, therefore one cannot let this mistake stand unchallenged.
>
> "Junius is quite right when he emphasizes the decisive influence of 'imperialist conditions' in the *present* war, when he says that behind Serbia stands [Tsarist] Russia, 'behind Serbian nationalism stands Russian imperialism,' that the participation of, for example, Holland in the war would *also* be imperialistic, because she, in the first place, would be defending her colonies, and, in the second place, would be an ally of one of the imperialist coalitions. This is indisputable—in relation to the *present* war. And when Junius, in this respect, emphasizes that which is for him of prime importance—the struggle against the 'phantom of national war' which at the present time dominates Social-Democratic policy, then it is impossible not to recognize his reasoning as correct and fully appropriate.
>
> "The mistake would be only in the exaggeration of this truth, in a departure from the Marxian requirement of being concrete, in the extension of the evaluation of the present war to every possible war under imperialism, in forgetting the national movements *against* imperialism."*

Among those who have surrounded

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XIX, pp. 180-81, Russian edition.

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and now have possession of Norman Thomas, and whose transmission of Trotsky's virus has reduced the Socialist Party from 30,000 to 3,000 members and its press to the physical character of a "throwaway" and to a political character much worse—there is an argument that runs this way: If the American or world working class *were* to support collective action among bourgeois-democratic states against the German-Italian-Japanese axis; and *if* this were to lead to a collective use of force against the war-makers—then, "No matter how it began, it would be *transformed* into a war against the Soviet Union." Since this priceless argument is the only present-day example of any solicitude for the "welfare" of the socialist state on the part of these "Socialists" who otherwise are trying (as Norman Thomas shamelessly did at Yale University) to persuade the world not to hate Hitler's regime more than the socialist state—let us see what Lenin said about possibilities of the *transformation* of a national war into imperialist war, and vice versa. Continuing with his criticism of the "Junius" pamphlet where we left off, we quote Lenin again:

"The only argument in defense of the thesis that 'there can be no more national wars,' is the one that the world is divided amongst a handful of 'great' imperialist powers, that therefore every war, even though it be at the beginning national, is *transformed* into an imperialist war, involving the interests of one of the imperialist powers or coalitions.

"The incorrectness of this argument is obvious. Certainly a basic postulate of the Marxian dialectic is that every aspect of nature and society is conditional and in flux, that there is *not a single* phenomenon which cannot under certain conditions become transformed into its opposite. A national war may become transformed into an imperialist war *and vice versa*. An example: the wars of the Great French Revolution began as national wars, and such they were. These wars were revolutionary; the defense of the Great Revolution against a coalition of counter-revolutionary monarchs. But when Napoleon set up the French empire with the enslavement of a number of long-established, powerful and vital national states of Europe, then out of the national French wars came imperialist wars, generating, *in their turn*, wars of national liberation *against* the imperialism of Napoleon.

"Only a sophist would obliterate the difference between an imperialist war and a national war on the ground that one may become transformed into the other. The dialectic has often served—as in the history of Greek philosophy—as a bridge to sophism. But we remain dialecticians, struggling for socialism, not by means of denying the possibility of all transformation in general, but by means of concrete analysis of the *given case* in its conditions and in its development."*

UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS ARE NATIONAL WARS POSSIBLE?

Lenin was then discussing, of course, not war in general, but concretely the war of 1914-18, and his argument is directed toward convincing the proletarian forces of the lack of any excuse whatsoever for support of that war. Social-chauvinists were appealing to the working class to support the war on the ground that the one or the other imperialist side represented the *national independence or national liberation* of the particular country. This raised the question of whether the war of 1914, even though it *started* as a war imperialist on both sides, might not be *trans-*

* *Ibid.*, p. 181.

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formed in character, becoming a war of national liberation on one side or the other. Lenin took up this question, saying:

"That the present imperialist war, of 1914-16, will be transformed into a national war is in the highest degree improbable, because the class that represents *forward* development is the proletariat, which objectively strives to transform it into civil war against the bourgeoisie; and furthermore because the strength of each of the two coalitions does not very materially differ from that of the other, and international finance capital has everywhere developed a reactionary bourgeoisie."*

But Lenin saw, and forcefully insisted that "national" wars, or "a great national war in Europe," *were possible*. He painstakingly forecast the conditions under which such wars were probable. His words are among the most prophetic of which history has any record. He showed that such wars would be possible under the following conditions:

1. If the imperialist war of 1914 were to be concluded in such a way that "the proletariat of Europe proved to be powerless for some twenty years."

2. If there were "victories of the type of Napoleon's and the enslavement of a number of vital national states."

3. "If extra-European imperialism (Japanese and American in the first place) held out for about twenty years, and did not give way to socialism, as a consequence, for example, of a Japanese-American war."

4. If there were a victorious revolution in Russia.

Or, to quote Lenin's words exactly:

"But one cannot declare such a transformation *impossible: if* the proletariat of Europe proved to be powerless for some twenty years; *if* the present war ended with victories of the type of Napoleon's and the enslavement of a number of vital national states; *if* extra-European imperialism (Japanese and American in the first place) also held out for about twenty years, and did not give way to socialism, as a consequence, for example, of a Japanese-American war, then *a great national war* in Europe would be possible. [My emphasis--*R.M.*] This would be a development of Europe *backward* by some decades. That is improbable. But it is not impossible; for to conceive of world history moving smoothly and unwaveringly forward, without occasional gigantic leaps backward, is undialectical, unscientific, theoretically untrue."*

Every reader should reflect on each of these conditions, noting for himself *how much* of these conditions, hypothetically forecast *twenty-three years ago* by Lenin, have become realities today.

Is it not one of the most phophetic judgments of all time—when Lenin could foresee that the consequence of betrayal and division of the working class by the opportunists of the Second International, rendering the working class "powerless for some twenty years" and bringing a "development of Europe *backward* by some decades," would quite possibly result in the rise of an ultra-reactionary state power menacing the national independence or existence of a whole series of peoples, resulting in "national wars" to preserve their existence, such as is now occurring in Spain and threatening France?

It is interesting to note the distinction that Lenin makes between the

* *Ibid.*, p. 182.

* *Ibid.*

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process of *national unification* (a *progressive* process), such as Germany was experiencing in the first stage of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and, on the other hand, the *aggression* by the same nation against other nations (a *reactionary* process), into which the Franco-Prussian war was transformed at its end (in aiding the Versaillese in suppression of the Paris Commune, etc.).

What process is the Germany of today going through? According to Hitler (and some defenders of his, whom we will mention later), Nazi Germany is going through the process of "national unification" in seizing and strangling Czechoslovakia, in invading Spain with blood and iron, in encircling France so as to crush out democracy and democratic ideas from Europe ("liquidating the results of the French Revolution of 1789" as Hitler calls it).

According to the views of all democrats, on the contrary, Nazi Germany, symbolized by its headsman's axe of the Middle Ages, with its deliberate slaughter, torture and robbery in pogroms, represents the *reactionary* process—a "development of Europe *backward* by some decades"—such a revival of forgotten primitive bestialities, in new combinations, as to defy comparison. If we do not compare it to Bismarck's attempts to crush French democracy, when he acted as the "gendarme of Europe," or to the type of Napoleon's "enslavement of a series of vital national states"—it is only because the present-day imperialism represents such a death-laden decadence, and the orgies of Hitler's ghouls such a death-like reversion as to outstrip any example of a reaction of the past century when capitalism still carried within it a capacity to permit further development of economic forces.

But in quoting the words of Lenin written twenty-three years ago, we make clear that Lenin foresaw with perfect accuracy the possibility that there might develop (under circumstances which he named precisely) the need for a world-wide struggle such as in defense of the present Spanish republic, and of China, and of Ethiopia, and of a bold, aggressive leadership by the working class to form with all other democratic forces a single democratic front of nations to preserve their national existence and independence.

Lenin's comment on the consequences of a continuation of "extra-European imperialism" (he speaks of Japan and America "in the first place") in its effects upon Europe is startling. The continuation of a reactionary policy by Japan today (the bloody war of conquest in China, and support of Hitler reaction in the heart of Europe) does *indeed* (coupled with a reaction in the United States) make a "great national war in Europe" not only possible, but inevitable. (Inevitable at least if the United States does not soon act more in accord with its President's declarations and less in accord with the will of the anti-New Deal clique in the State Department and embassies abroad.)

And what of the United States? What of our *own* imperialism? Is it not evident that the failure of the United States to conduct a consistent

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democratic foreign policy is *one of the main factors* leading straight to a "great national war in Europe," already partly in process and rapidly developing further, merging inevitably with the Japan-China and all-America struggle as a world war?

As we all know, Lenin was already able in 1915 to see the probability of a revolution in Russia before the end of the war. And sharply, clearly, he foresaw what *we must all see now—the profound effect upon all questions of war,* that would be made by a *revolution in Russia!* He said:

"And in a condition of intense exhaustion of the 'great' powers in the present war or under conditions of a victory of the revolution in Russia, national wars, and indeed victorious ones, are fully possible. Interventions of imperialist powers are in practice *not* realizable under all conditions, for one thing. And for another thing, when some argue superficially: A war of a small state against a gigantic one is hopeless, then about this one must remark that a hopeless war is also a war; besides, certain phenomena within the 'giants'—for example the beginning of revolution—can render a 'hopeless' war very 'hopeful.'"*

The establishment of the U.S.S.R., and the *carrying through of the policies of Stalin* in the First, Second and Third Five-Year Plans have worked a profound change upon the whole European and Asiatic situation—in fact, the whole world situation. Lenin spoke of the fact that a socialist revolution might have an effect, among other things, upon the possible *character of future wars;* that such wars might take the character of *national* struggles for liberation. This proved to be true.

An unprecedented condition under which the second World War is beginning is this:

The most powerful state in all of Europe and all of Asia is a socialist state. Inevitably the socialist state has become a "powerful buttress of peace and brotherhood between the peoples," an "indestructible bulwark of the peoples throughout the world in the struggle against fascist enslavement."*

And—all the poker-game bluffs of Mussolini and Hitler to the contrary notwithstanding—the socialist production of the U.S.S.R., plus the ruthless purging of the army to rid it of the agents of foreign fascist governments—of the "Francos" of Messrs. Trotsky and Bukharin—have placed it in the position of the strongest power, in the military sense, of all the Old World. This means that the balance of power has been fundamentally altered. The overwhelming superiority of war-capacity is on the side of the democratic states and the smaller powers threatened with war and with national extinction by the fascist war-makers.

Because of the existence and strength of the U.S.S.R., the democratic states *cannot* be conquered by the fascist states unless they can be isolated and crushed one by one. (It is, of course, in the effort to break down the confidence and thereby bring about the isolation of each of the democratic states that such lies as

* *Ibid.*, p. 183.

* "The Communist International Manifesto, November, 1938," *The Communist,* December, 1938, p. 1073.

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Lindbergh's about the "weakness" of the U.S.S.R. are told.)

WHAT NATIONAL WARS ARE INEVITABLE?

While foreseeing the present *European* situation as "probable," Lenin's scientific method was also applied to this study of *Asia,* where he forecast the present situation as not only simply "probable" but "inevitable." Writing in *1916,* Lenin was able to trace with astonishing accuracy not only the struggles that occurred later in Persia and Turkey, but also the terrific *national* war, the present war of national liberation in China. Continuing his criticism of "Junius," he said:

"Further. Not only probable, but *inevitable* in the epoch of imperialism, are national wars on the part of colonies and semi-colonies. In the colonies and semi-colonies (China, Turkey, Persia) live nearly a thousand millions of people, that is, *more than half* of the population of the world. The national-liberation movements here are either already very strong or else they are growing and ripening. Every war is the continuation of politics by other means. The continuation of the national-liberation politics of colonies *inevitably* will be national wars on their part against imperialism. Such wars may lead to imperialist war of the now 'great' imperialist powers, but may also fail to lead to it; this depends on many circumstances.

"An example: England and France fought a seven-year war for colonies, *i.e.,* conducted an imperialist war (which is also possible on the basis of slavery, and on the basis of primitive capitalism, as well as on the modern basis of highly developed capitalism)."*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XIX, p. 182, Russian edition.

CAN CAPITALIST GREAT POWERS PARTICIPATE IN A STRUGGLE AGAINST REACTION?

And here Lenin makes a most interesting point, incidentally to establishing the inevitability of national wars of colonial liberation. It is a clear answer to those whose way of defending Hitler's, Mussolini's and Japan's conquests is to admonish the working class that since the bourgeois-democratic states (England, France, the United States) are *also* imperialistic—it is therefore "imperialistic" and "reactionary" for the Communists to call for a democratic front, including those states, in defense of peace and of China, Ethiopia and Spain, against the fascist war-makers. We must, they say, do nothing to cause these powers to interfere with Japan's murders in China, or Mussolini's and Hitler's butcheries in Ethiopia and Spain, because in opposing those imperialisms we would be "supporting British, French and Yankee imperialism."

Lenin chooses an American historical analogy, that of the "Seven Years' War," or, as America knows it, the "French and Indian War," of 1756-1763, saying:

"France was defeated and lost a part of her colonies. A few years later began the national-liberation war of the United States against England alone. France and Spain, who themselves continued to own portions of the present United States, out of enmity to England, *i.e.,* out of their imperialist interests, concluded a friendly treaty with the states in insurrection against England. French troops together with the Americans fought the English. We have here a national-liberation war, in which imperialist rivalry is an incidental element, having no serious significance—the reverse of what we see in

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the war of 1914-16 (the national element in the Austro-Serbian War is of no serious significance in comparison to the all-decisive imperialist rivalry). From this it is clear how absurd it would be to apply the concept 'imperialism' in a stereotyped way, deducing from it an 'impossibility' of national wars. A national-liberation war, for example, of an alliance of Persia, India and China, against some or other imperialist powers, is quite possible and probable, for it flows from the national-liberation movements of these countries, in which case the transformation of such a war into an imperialist war between the present imperialist powers would depend upon very many concrete circumstances, and to guarantee their occurrence would be absurd."*

Here is the clear answer to those who want to find an excuse to avoid effective help to China and Spain against the fascist butcher, and who offer the excuse that, because of "revolutionary principles" (God save the mark!), they cannot favor any help to China and Spain *by nations which themselves hold colonies.* True, Lenin refers with great emphasis to the colonial struggle "against some or other imperialist powers"—he wouldn't be Lenin if he didn't—but again he applies the subject sharply to the possibility of eventualities in modern Europe. Furthermore, he sees in "Eastern Europe," specifically, a scene of possible "national wars." He continues:

"In the third place even in Europe one cannot assume that national wars are impossible in the epoch of imperialism. The 'epoch of imperialism' has rendered the present war imperialist, it inevitably generates (as long as socialism does not come about) new imperialist wars; it has made the policies of the present Great Powers through and through imperialistic; but this 'epoch' does not at all exclude national wars, for example, on the part of small (let us say, annexed or nationally oppressed) states, *against* imperialist powers, just as it does not exclude national movements on a large scale in the East of Europe."*

COLLECTIVE ACTION OF CAPITALIST POWERS FOR PEACE

But what did Lenin think of collective action for peace? A collective action in which capitalist great powers would be participants—great powers themselves holding vast colonial empires, but having, under the conditions of today, no interest in an immediate war and whose national existence in some cases (as in the case of France) is menaced by the fascist war-makers? Is it true, as some are saying, that adherence to the principles of Lenin would require us to abstain from all coalitions of states including *that* sort of state as well as the socialist state, against the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis now making war on Spain and China? Let us see what Lenin said in the war of 1914. We must remember that Lenin was then under the supreme necessity to apply every energy he possessed to convince all of the duty of fighting tooth and nail against *that* war of 1914. Yet Lenin even in that extreme crisis (August, 1915), felt it would be impermissible to omit mention of *other possible conditions* under which it would be the duty of Socialists to take sides definitely with one of the belligerent parties in a war between imperialist states. He wrote:

"Suppose all nations interested in maintaining international treaties declared war

* *Ibid.*, pp. 182-83.

* *Ibid.*, p. 183.

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against Germany, demanding the liberation and indemnification of Belgium. In this case the sympathy of the Socialists would naturally be on the side of Germany's enemies." *

This definite, clear statement he immediately followed up with the warning that such a condition did *not* exist in 1914-15, that "the war is being waged not for the sake of Belgium," etc., and that "it is impossible to help Belgium without helping to throttle Austria or Turkey, etc." But he established beyond question his own adherence to the line that his Party follows now.

LENIN'S WARNING AGAINST VULGARIZATION OF THEORY CONCERNING WAR

The article on the "Junius" pamphlet illustrates forcefully what Lenin meant in saying that—"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary practice."

In the article he explains that deep concern which caused him even to pause in the most terrific moment of war crisis to warn against a mistake of theory, the danger of which did not immediately apply to the situation of *that* moment. Continuing his comments on the "Junius" pamphlet he wrote:

"We dwelt upon the falsity of the proposition that 'there can be no more national wars' in detail because theoretically it is clearly erroneous. It would be profoundly sad indeed if the 'Lefts' began to exhibit an indifference to the theory of Marxism just at the time when the creation of the Third International is possible only on the basis of non-vulgarized Marxism." **

But he showed that, in at least one aspect of great importance, the theoretical error of "Junius" could cause a deep-going blunder even then. And this particular point touches close to the question of armaments. Continuing, Lenin said:

"But also in the practical-political aspect this mistake is very harmful; from it is deduced the absurd propaganda of 'disarmament,' on the ground that there could be no wars except reactionary ones; from it is derived the still more absurd and outright reactionary indifference toward national movements. Such indifference becomes chauvinism when members of European 'great' nations, that is, nations oppressing a mass of small and colonial peoples, announce with a would-be learned air, 'there can be no more national wars!' "*

OPERATION OF THE "AXIS" IN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES

The consequences of confusion on the question of war today, among the democratic masses and among honest leaders of them, could literally be the death of civilization.

It is a great mistake when one thinks that fascism thrusts upon the world *only* a belligerent militarist spirit. For, fascism has two sides: For their home country—the mood of blood-and-iron; the belligerent, blood-lusting feudal philosophy of the Samurai; the sadist gun-thuggery of the brown-shirts, the degenerate spirit of joy-through-murder of a Bruno Mussolini.

But—for *other countries?*

For China, for *induction into the people of China,* the philosophy peddled by fascism is—*non-resistance!* In Ethiopia the Italian fascist message is of the virtue of submission; for Spain

* Lenin, *The Imperialist War,* p. 225.
** *Collected Works,* Vol. XIX, pp. 183-184.

* *Ibid.,* p. 184.

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their export philosophy is best illustrated by their attempt to induce the Spanish people to believe that the people's front government is "imperialist" and should be overthrown.

And here among us the goods they sell are:

"Neutrality." "Isolation." "Pacifism." "Appeasement."

What are these goods?

A. "Neutrality" is an alliance with fascist aggressors. This is already recognized; it needs no argument.

B. "Isolation" (so-called) is not in the least a real isolation, but a domination of the foreign policy of a series of democratic countries by the fascist states preparatory to their conquest.

In order to win a free hand for the slaughter of Spain, the wiping out of the French republic and of the Soviet Socialist State, the German government presents its case in America, through one of its agents, in the form of a plea "that America stay out of European wars." Opposition to Hitler's program is described as a campaign "to manipulate the anti-war sentiment of idealistic people, and particularly of the youth, in such a way that it may easily by converted into fighting loyalty to the Soviet Union," and the socialist state is described as "a ruthless, bloody and intemperate personal tyranny." (The words quoted above are written by Max Eastman in the fascist magazine *Liberty.)*

C. "Hemisphere isolation," to ensure successful penetration of America.

The fascist leader Lawrence Dennis, who, in the American organ of German fascism, *The American Mercury,* for January, 1939, proclaims that:

". . . Hitler, when analyzed simply on the basis of historical fact, is not only the greatest political genius since Napoleon, but also the most rational,"

and who agrees "100 per cent" with Chamberlain that:

". . . England could not afford to risk war and communism, and would do better to accept a Nazi hegemony over the Continent of Europe. . . ."

—this Mr. Dennis proposes a form of the "isolation" policy intended to be more seductive than the outright, all-inclusive "put-up-the-shutters" kind that is losing support so rapidly. Says Dennis:

"What is the rational American policy for the post-Munich world? Clearly this world will be divisible into four areas of power: the first, the Americans dominated by the United States; the second, Continental Europe dominated by Germany in close partnership with Italy; the third, the Far East dominated by Japan; and the fourth, the British Empire."

Of course the only reality about this schematic sophistry is its inherent proposal that fascist Germany be allowed to conquer all of Europe and Japan be allowed to conquer China, which, in the world of reality, would mean the completion of two-thirds of the task of conquering also South America if not all of Latin America. The very first stage—the fascist conquest of Spain—would be the accomplishment of one-third of the task. "Well lathered is half shaved."

Through this stooge Dennis, Hitler holds out the inducement of the empty words:

"In this world situation our only policy

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is to uphold the Monroe Doctrine and abandon entirely the Far East and Europe."

Why mention, in an article on Lenin's teachings, this curious exhibition of the technique of Hitler's propaganda in America? Because this formula for capitulation to the fascist conquest of the world is *almost sure* to captivate certain confused persons, as it is intended, who will make it another catchword with which to hold back the haters of war from any effective opposition to war. (Norman Thomas thus far has *never* failed to fall for such pretty, schematic formulations; we do not forget that as long as three years ago he advanced as a "socialist principle" the whole substance of the "neutrality" policy by which Spain and China are in desperate danger of strangling, and two years ago Thomas proposed the entire "appeasement" policy, even including its extension to colonies!)

The "export" brand of fascist militarism is "pacifism" or "appeasement."

"Appeasement" is another name for the assurance of a second world war. "Appeasement" is a name for equipping the fascist powers with what they need for the conquest of Europe and Africa. Not one single thing has been given or asked under the name of "appeasement" except strategic military objectives. "Appeasement," thus far, has given war-seeking Germany the equivalent of an additional one million men released from duty against the Sudeten fortifications of Czechoslovakia, and brought to the West for use against France which does not want war. It has, in addition, cut off from support of France an army of a third of a million men—34 divisions, and turned a part of this Czechoslovakian army to the use of Hitler to enable him to make war against Europe.

"Appeasement" has robbed, murdered, mutilated, tortured and exiled thousands of Jews of Germany in the most brutal pogroms of history, instigated by Hitler in agreement with Chamberlain, helped by the supposedly American Ambassador in London.

By "appeasement" Chamberlain will sell Hitler and Mussolini the right to butcher the flower of the population of heroic Spain, in order to place German and Italian guns at the back of France and to sever Europe from a French-African Empire ear-marked for German-Italian conquest.

We repeat—*not one single thing has been asked or given* under the name and policy of "appeasement" except *military objectives* needed solely to enable fascist Germany, Italy and Japan to open the second world war with a chance to win it.

Without "appeasement" there could not now be a second world war.

Naturally enough, the open propaganda of the point of view that Hitler wants to instil into the *Western* hemisphere is being entrusted mainly to Hitler's anti-labor spy and organizer of sabotage, Trotsky, who sends it out from the center of Coyoacan, Mexico, in simon-pure form. We all recall vividly the central thesis of Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese fascists: that the present wars and approaching wars are due to a *"disproportion of colonial possessions"* as between

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the fascist and the non-fascist nations. This is their thesis as opposed to the democratic thesis that the war and the menace of more wars come from *fascist aggression*. Supporting the Hitler thesis, Trotsky says:

"The flagrant and ever-growing *disproportion between the specific weight of England and France,* not to mention Holland, Belgium and Portugal, in world economy and the *colossal dimensions of their possessions* are as much the source of world conflicts and of new wars as the insatiable greed of the 'fascist' aggressors." [Trotsky's quotation marks around the word "fascist."] [My emphasis.—*R.M.*]

Trotsky almost surpasses himself in backing up Hitler in the lie that he will "claim nothing more in Europe" (until Lithuania?). For Trotsky calls the shameless rape of Czechoslovakia "an episode on the road toward the struggle for *colonies.*" In the midst of the crisis of Hitler's drive on Czechoslovakia, this Gestapo agent blazoned from his detective agency in Mexico the "explanation" that, not Germany, but *Czechoslovakia* was "imperialistic," and was the *aggressor* against Hitler Germany! Said Hitler's Pinkerton:

"A war, even on the part of isolated Czechoslovakia, would thus have been waged *not for national independence* but for the preservation and, if possible, the extension of the borders of imperialist exploitation." [My emphasis.—*R.M.*]

Does the reader get this? Defending *Czechoslovakia* against *Hitler* would have been *"imperialistic"!* And to make doubly sure, we refer to Trotsky's further words that it is possible a war will break out "in which Czechoslovakia may be found on the victorious side, and participate in a new *dismemberment of Germany"!!*

He calls the Communists and the democratic defenders of Czechoslovakia defenders of "the imperialist interests of the Czech bourgeoisie."

But let's see what the gangster of the Gestapo has to say about the *function* of Hitler—since Hitler, he claims, is more in the position of a *victim* of "imperialist" Czechoslovakia than otherwise. Trotsky finds that what Hitler has accomplished in Germany is *"national unification"!* "Bismarck," says Mr. Trotsky, "only half fulfilled this task, leaving almost intact the entire feudal and particularist rubbish," and failed, as well, to centralize Germany. And, says Trotsky, "Both these tasks fell to Hitler. The leader of fascism came forward, in his own fashion, as the continuator of Bismarck, . . ." etc.

So, according to this chief of Hitler's propaganda in the Americas, Hitler is the *progressive;* Hitler is the creator of German national unity, and therefore the defender of a *national* cause against the imperialism of—Czechoslovakia! And the cause of the second imperialist war is that Hitler is denied his right to colonies!

So much for "Van der Lubbe" Trotsky.

* * *

The Communist Party calls for "Social and National Security." This is the only possible course to follow in the complete application of the principles of Lenin.

"The most important lesson of the recent events is precisely that unless the reactionary imperialist cliques and capitulators in one's own country are curbed, it is impossible to

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curb the unbridled fascist brigands, it is impossible to conduct a successful struggle in defense of the freedom and independence of the peoples and to defend world peace."*

These are the lessons of Leninism, and in full accord with these lessons, the Communist International, led by Stalin and Dimitroff, declares:

"He who does not fight for peace, cannot avert war.

"To fight for peace means that in each country the liberty of the people must be defended against the reactionary bourgeoisie. . . .

"Only through the medium of an alliance of peoples conducting a self-sacrificing struggle for the cause of peace is it possible to thwart the criminal plans of the instigators of war. A defense cordon of armed peoples who have joined their forces with the great Soviet people will doom fascism to impotence and will hasten its defeat and inevitable ruin."*

* Georgi Dimitroff, *After Munich*, p. 19, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

* "Communist International Manifesto," *The Communist*, December, 1938, p. 1076.

"Marxist-Leninist theory is overcoming that long-standing split between thought and action, between theory and practice, which is one of the chief characteristics of bourgeois society. Capitalism separated the worker from his tools; our theory is the only instrument that shows the way to reunite them, on a higher plane. Capitalism separated the city from the country, industry from agriculture, and set them in antagonism one to the other; our theory alone promises to dissolve this disastrous contradiction. Capitalism sharply divides the population into classes, and sets them into struggle against one another; only our theory, guiding the masses of the people, leads to the classless society, to the brotherhood of man."—Earl Browder, *Theory As a Guide to Action.*

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LIMA—AN ANSWER TO MUNICH

BY R. A. MARTINEZ and HARRY ROBINSON

WHEN the Eighth International Conference of American States opened at Lima, Peru, on December 9, the eyes of an anxious world were centered upon it.

With the consummation of the Munich conspiracy, many things have become clearer to wider masses. The purpose and character of German, Italian and Japanese penetration in Latin America, in all phases (economic, political, ideological) and by all means (military missions, control of strategic ports, radio barrage, native fascist movements, etc.), are discernible as a serious, large-scale attempt to encircle the United States. Latin America, as a huge reserve of war materials, with its copper, nitrates, nickel, wheat, meats, coffee, is indispensable to the fascists in their drive to dominate the world. No longer does Britain's navy constitute a barrier to foreign invasion. After Munich, it was neutralized, giving the fascist axis a free hand. America's danger was open. How would it be met?

There could be no severer test to reveal who were the true representatives of American patriotism and the defense of the national interests of the American peoples. And those forces in America which are anti-national, anti-democratic showed their true colors.

Herbert Hoover, representing the pro-fascist wing of American imperialism; the feudal oligarchic cliques in power in some Latin American states; and the pro-fascist press of the continent came out with a common cry: "There is no danger of fascist aggression!" And the German and Italian fascist press, with their agents, the Trotskyites, seconded them with full lung power.

In this light the conference and its results should be judged. How did the democratic forces of the continent answer Munich? What road towards the unity of all forces internationally in opposing aggression was pointed out to an anxious world? How would the threats of fascism be answered, democracy upheld and stimulated in this hemisphere?

When the picture is clearly seen, there can be no question, despite the attempts of the reactionary, capitulatory press to tone down the conference, that Lima achieved its main objectives.

UNITY GROWS AGAINST AGGRESSION

The Lima Conference marked a higher democratic unity in the United States and on a hemisphere scale.

In our country, even some of those circles of the bourgeoisie who suffer from fascist trade competition, barter agreements, discriminatory pacts and the live danger of the complete loss of investments, and who before Munich

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were bitter enemies of the domestic and foreign policies of the administration, awakened to the threat of the Munich conspirators.

Does the fact that some of these trading interests support the Good Neighbor policy mean that that policy is nothing more than a defense of their interests? Not at all! The opposition of the gentlemen of the National Foreign Trade Council to fascist penetration in Latin America coincides with the most important and immediate interests of the democratic movement throughout the hemisphere. The defense of democracy today is at the same time a fight against the most reactionary circles of finance capital in the United States who are the allies of the German, Italian and Japanese fascists and the feudal oligarchic cliques in the Latin American countries.

That the Good Neighbor Policy is not a defense of the interests of the reactionary circles of American finance capital can be seen in the words of President Roosevelt, in his speech of October 26:

"We in the United States do not seek to impose on any other people either our way of life or our internal form of government. But we are determined to maintain and protect that way of life and that form of government for ourselves. And we are determined to use every endeavor in order that the Western Hemisphere may work out its own inter-related salvation in the light of its own inter-related experience."

The alarm and sense of national emergency, the necessity for national unity, voiced in this statement reflected itself in the composition of the American delegation to the Lima Conference, which included Mr. Cordell Hull and other government representatives, delegates from the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L., prominent Catholics and Protestants, representatives of women's organizations, and Alfred M. Landon. Regardless of their specific approach to the solutions of the problems facing our hemisphere, all these delegates were united in their will to prevent fascism from setting foot on this continent.

On the basis of this broad national unity, State Secretary Hull was able to set the anti-fascist keynote of the conference in his opening speech. He made it clear that the conference was confronted with the alternative of "freedom or serfdom, order or anarchy, progress or retrogression, civilization or barbarism," thus not only recognizing the fascist threat but characterizing it concretely in all its hideousness. To answer this threat he told the delegates that they had the important duty:

". . . to ourselves and to humanity to maintain and preserve inviolate our own institutions and the beliefs on which they rest. It is imperative that the twenty-one republics of the Western Hemisphere proclaim unequivocally and unmistakably their profound belief that only the type of national organization and international relationship that we and the rest of mankind have been persistently and laboriously building up in the course of recent generations can make it possible for nations to advance materially and culturally, and for men to be free."

In a world with undeclared wars raging, with bloody aggressors riding roughshod over the rights of entire nations, such utterances cannot but advance the cause of international law and popular determination to defend democracy.

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FASCIST STRATAGEMS AGAINST UNITY

The first step of the fascist strategy to prevent continental unity against the aggressors by denying the existence of any threat of aggression was squelched from the beginning by this determined stand.

They proceeded to develop their next step: to prevent unanimous decisions at all costs, to show up the conference as divided. They endeavored to distort and slander the healthy anti-imperialist sentiments of the Latin American peoples, trying to make it appear that these were directed against the Good Neighbor policy and a continent united against aggression.

With insults, threats and general insolence, the fascist press reiterated that the opposition to the penetration of fascism in Latin America was nothing but North American trickery. The fascist correspondents who infested Lima, the pro-fascist and Trotskyite press followed the same line, and it is unfortunate that certain democratic currents in Latin America were affected by this propaganda.

It must be seen that the conference was preceded by events of great democratic significance. First, the Chilean People's Front had just won a tremendous victory over the forces of fascism and reaction in the presidential campaign. Secondly, the controversy between the Mexican and U. S. governments over land claims had ended. Thirdly, the visit of Colonel Fulgencio Batista, outstanding figure in Cuban politics, to the United States had served to place the relations of the two countries on the basis of the democratic path taken by the Cuban government. Among the important features of the Cuban government's recent policy are official help to Republican Spain and the official recognition of the Communist Party as one of the decisive democratic political forces. The granting of a $50,000,000 credit to Cuba and the planned revision of the Reciprocity Treaty help solve some of Cuba's economic difficulties and thus counteract the fascist sabotage of the island economy. Fourthly, the Colombian government had demonstrated its anti-fascist attitude by giving aid to Spain and by recalling its Minister to Germany.

In all other countries the conference aroused the deepest hopes and gave rise to the broadest united mass movements. In Argentina, a group of outstanding political leaders, headed by Marcelo T. De Alvear, former president, and leader of the Radical Party—the most powerful democratic party of Argentina—joined with representatives of other parties to consider "the serious danger that exists for the independence and integrity of the American nations, and in order to effect joint action for continental defense and against fascist domination of any of our republics."

THE ROLE OF ARGENTINA

It is necessary, however, to explain the part played by the representatives of the Argentinian government at the Lima Conference. In the past as in the present, Argentina has moved politically and economically within the orbit of British imperialism.

Argentina is the most economically developed country in Latin America and historically has presented the most consequential opposition to American imperialism. True, its opposition has reflected the historical

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contradictions between British and U. S. finance capital, but it has also reflected the attempts of the people to achieve independence from both imperialisms. Therefore, subtly, the Argentine delegation, while pretending to stand for national rights and capitalizing on the wholesome national aspirations of its people, did all it could to bring the voice of Chamberlain to the conference. First, it denied the fascist threat and therefore the necessity for preparedness. Then, under the pressure of the powerful mass movement in Argentina, the delegation withdrew its objection and was forced to resort to more subtle methods, namely, to tone down the anti-fascist, anti-aggression content, of the Lima Conference. But while it did not succeed, it must be noted that this opposition helped feed the "disunity" arguments of the fascists and also made it more difficult for the conference as a whole to put even sharper teeth in its resolutions.

THE LIMA PROGRAM

The four major documents adopted, nevertheless, are landmarks in continental unity; the Declaration of the Principles of Solidarity (Declaration of Lima); the resolution against religious bigotry and intolerance; the resolution condemning the collective political activities of alien groups; and the resolution on trade agreements, reflecting the anti-fascist sentiments of the peoples of the hemisphere.

The Declaration of Lima is based on the recognition of the "similarity of republican institutions" of the countries of this hemisphere, on "their unshakable will for peace, their uniform sentiment of humanity and tolerance and through their absolute adherence to the principles of international law, of equal sovereignty of states and of individual liberty without religious or racial prejudice." It "reaffirms their continental solidarity" while declaring that "the governments of the American republics will act independently in their individual capacities as separate states." The declaration also establishes the procedure of regular consultations and facilitates the holding of these consultations.

Perhaps one of the most important documents of the Lima Conference, which, incidentally, the American press has hardly played up, is the "Declaration of American Principles." This presents a program around which all "interested in the preservation of world order under law, in peace with justice, and in the social and economic welfare of mankind" can rally. Part of this program, of decisive importance to the semi-colonial countries of Latin America, is that which states that "economic reconstruction contributes to national and international well-being, as well as to peace among nations."

The other decisions sum up the sentiments of the peoples against the manifestations of fascist barbarism, intolerance and cruelty.

As Secretary Hull stated on his return, the conference abandoned all pretensions towards placing the American republics on a "shining but isolated plateau." The results of it on the development of a more consistent democratic American foreign policy were shown in Hull's open call to the British and French peoples to main-

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tain "the rule of order under law rather than rule of force or threat of force."

Thus, a clear program for the active defense of our hemisphere was elaborated and the means necessary for that defense clearly indicated to all the peoples.

The fascists and their Trotskyite henchmen are doing all they can in the interests of fascist penetration to discredit the achievements of the conference by pointing to a number of anti-democratic governments in Latin America, especially that of Benavides in Peru.

There is no question that the Benavides government is a dictatorial regime which has closed down parliament and ruthlessly attacked the democratic movement. Neither is there any question that such terroristic governments, which lean upon foreign fascism and impede democracy, constitute no guarantee of a real defense of the hemisphere; that such countries may be the enemy within the gates upon whom fascism will depend to strike against the democracies and thus avoid the appearance of overseas aggression. But how are we going to help the Peruvian people, who do not want fascism and who do not want aggression, to change that situation? Comrade Browder's statement on the eve of the Lima Conference pointed out:

"We need have no illusions about the democratic character of many Latin American governments (including that of Peru itself) but even so a Pan-American front against the Munich powers and Japan is the first condition for raising Pan-American democracy to a higher and more effective level."

In the Lima decisions and resolutions, the democratic forces in the countries where terroristic or semi-terroristic forces are in power have been endowed with a banner around which the anti-fascist forces can rally.

Hull's speech on the achievements at Lima contained the following significant words:

"The deliberations and declarations of this conference prove that the influence of the American peoples is being thrown into the struggle on the side of international peace, justice and fair dealing, and that our nations stand for measures which have the welfare of peoples and not the interests of dominant governing groups for their objectives."

The anti-fascist decisions of the Lima Conference will bear fruit to the degree that the democratic forces in each country and their governments are in a position to give them life. Their application and the defense of our continent against fascism are intimately related to the further democratic development in the United States and the Latin American countries.

In this sense one cannot overlook the fact that the conference did not take any anti-Communist position, despite the attempts of Landon, and the attempts, undoubtedly, of the delegates from some of the undemocratic countries—Brazil and Peru. To have taken an anti-Communist position would have meant in practice to attack the unity of the people in those countries where the anti-fascist struggle is furthest advanced. It would have meant attacking the national unity of the Mexican people, where the Communist Party has a place of honor; it would have been an affront to the newly elected Chilean govern-

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ment, where the vice-president of the Popular Front is Carlos Contreras Labarca, Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party; it would have been to put the Communist Party of Cuba, leading force in the Cuban democratic revival, in the same category as the sugar magnates, bankers and pro-Franco Spanish merchants, who are doing all in their power to obstruct the determination of Colonel Batista to heed the democratic urgings of the Cuban people.

Nonetheless, there were a number of shortcomings at the conference. No direct solidarity was expressed with the cause of the Spanish republic, despite the overwhelming sympathy of the peoples of the hemisphere for their struggle against fascist invasion.

But it must be understood that these shortcomings were inherent in the character of the delegations which represented governments that in their majority are not democratic. The reports in *The New York Times* of the censorship, searches and fascist press barrage in Lima itself are an eloquent example. Another is Chile, where, despite the election of the new Popular Front government, the delegation represented the pro-fascist Alessandri government which had just renewed its commercial treaty with Germany for six months.*

The essential thing is that Lima created the instruments by which the democratic movement can forge ahead, overcome these shortcomings and give to the Good Neighbor policy a more consistent democratic content.

FOR A CONSISTENT GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

It is interesting to observe in this connection how certain reactionary forces attempt to pose the Good Neighbor policy as against the Monroe Doctrine and thus attempt to give the impression that the need for continental defense is an old story already taken care of by the Monroe Doctrine. This is their subtle way of attempting to cause disunity between the people of the United States and of Latin America, where forty years of application of the Monroe Doctrine as an instrument of imperialist domination has left a bitter, hateful taste. But the Good Neighbor policy, while retaining the defensive character of the Monroe Doctrine, is distinct from it, in that it places all the progressive elements on the basis of complete equality, as recognized in the Declaration of Lima. Hemisphere defense has become a multilateral obligation as against the old unilateral policy of the United States.

But Secretary Hull went further in his efforts to make the Good Neighbor policy distinct from the past policies of the United States when he analyzed inter-American relationships in his speech on the achievements of the conference, thus:

"These American republics emerged as the great triumph of human rights, a conquest of the idealists of this hemisphere. But the task was not finished. In a second stage there was forged the conception of equality of American states, their absolute right as independent nations, irrespective of military strength, of territorial extent, or of number of population, to speak with equal voice.

* Pedro Aguirre Cerda, the new, Popular Front President of Chile, was not inaugurated until December 25, 1938, when the Lima Conference had ended.

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"Yet even juridic equality, great though it is as a buttress for states, was not enough. There remained to be strengthened the bond of friendship, of understanding, and of fair dealing—the bond of good neighborship.

"First we become free; then we acknowledge ourselves equal; than we unite in common friendship."

Pan-Americanism in Lima was also placed on a new basis. In the past the Pan-American Union was the docile instrument of the imperialist aims of the United States bankers and merchants. It never offered as much as a semblance of opposition, even at times such as at the Sixth Conference in Havana in 1928, when American planes were bombing Nicaraguan cities and several Caribbean countries were under the Yankee military boot.

But at Lima special attention was given to the right of each country to solve its national problems as it saw fit, repeating the basic principles of the Good Neighbor policy on non-intervention, on abstention from the use of force to collect pecuniary claims, etc. The very careful attitude of the U. S. delegation in stimulating complete and free discussion and avoiding any semblance of imposition was a good example of the new and equal relationship which now exists between the American states.

Already the reactionary press, as part of the fight against the New Deal, is attempting to create an atmosphere which would prevent the formation of the broadest national support to the Good Neighbor policy and its consistent and democratic application.

The reactionary *Daily News* prints a vicious article terming the situation in the Mexican republic "communist chaos," and virtually calling for the breaking off of relations and for American intervention. The *Herald Tribune* subtly echoes the *News* and warns against the sacrifice of American interests in Latin America (read: imperialist investment interests).

Thus reaction wishes to place obstacles in the path of the development of a consistent Good Neighborhood policy which would not only express formal political recognition of the equality of the Latin American states, but would give active help to democracy by assisting the national aspirations of the peoples to regain their national wealth, to improve their general economic, social and cultural standards.

This is of immediate urgency for the two countries that stand at the head of the anti-fascist struggle in Latin America, Mexico and Chile. The United States market should be re-established for Mexican silver and oil and all its export products. The program of the Chilean Popular Front for "national resurgence" should be backed with all the resources at the disposal of the United States. American recovery likewise depends on the understanding that there could be no greater customer for U. S. products than a Latin America free of semi-feudal agricultural bondage, free of the super-exploitation of rapacious imperialist enterprises.

Extension of the Trade Agreement program; fuller use of the Import-Export Bank; credits; revision of those reciprocity agreements which prevent independent development, such as has taken place with Cuba, will all be steps toward economic reconstruc-

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tion in Latin America and therefore towards a fundamental popular democracy.

It is clear after Munich that only popular democratic governments can constitute a guarantee against fascist penetration. The interests of national defense of the United States are intimately linked with a program which will encourage and aid the peoples of Latin America to take control of their own destinies.

A consistently applied Good Neighbor policy will help this. But a great deal depends on the men who are charged with implementing it. One of the major tasks in cleansing the Augean stables of the Yankee imperialist past is to remove those gentlemen of the diplomatic and consular service of the U. S. State Department who would be pleased to find a common ground between *their* interpretation of the Good Neighbor policy and the old predatory imperialist policy.

Further, Puerto Rico, the direct colony of the United States, can be no "cultural bridge" between the Americas while half its population is unemployed and hungry. Governor Blanton Winship, anti-democratic military symbol of national oppression, violator of the attempts of the New Deal to extend social legislation and economic reform to Puerto Rico, must be removed. A carefully planned program which will lead towards the extension of democracy, economic reconstruction, and the well-being of the Puerto Rican people, remains the responsibility of a consistently applied Good Neighbor policy.

That is why the American people must remain alert and clear to see to it that such a consistently democratic American foreign policy is continued and applied. It depends on the growth and vigilance of the broad democratic movement of our people to guarantee that Lima will not be perverted.

Thus will a united hemisphere be built as envisaged by the Lima Declaration which, from Canada to Patagonia, will constitute a formidable, impenetrable bulwark to fascist aggression and which, in unison with the democratic forces throughout the world, will put a stop to fascist penetration and aggression.

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NEW METHODS OF POLITICAL MASS ORGANIZATION

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

[*This is the first of three articles by Comrade Foster on the question of mass organization and struggle. The next two will follow in consecutive issues of* THE COMMUNIST *and will be entitled respectively: "Mass Campaigns," and "The Communist Party and Mass Work."*—The Editors.]

"The strength of the working class is organization. Without organization the mass of the proletariat is nothing. Organized it is all."—*Lenin.*

THE two traditional mass political parties, Democratic and Republican, have during the course of their long existence worked out certain definite organization techniques. In this period of deepening capitalist crisis, however, American monopoly capitalists, heading in the general direction of fascism, are departing from these old organization techniques, and are developing new and more sinister systems of confusing, terrorizing and regimenting the masses. Among these are their ever-growing stranglehold on the press, their increasing radio monopoly, their sit-down strike of big capital and their hypocritical systems of demagogy.

Without here analyzing at length the new capitalist political mass technique, it is sufficient to state that manifestly this dangerous development makes it imperative that the forces of democracy, on pain of disaster, must also drastically improve their methods of mass work over those primitive systems inherited from the two old parties. The democratic front—the alliance of workers, farmers and lower middle class—needs to develop a modernized technique of mass organization, corresponding to the new political situation in which it operates.

The need for this organizational improvement is very urgent. Before us stand the 1940 elections, which will doubtless decide whether the United States is to continue and expand its present democratic trend or fall into the hands of the reactionaries, with the consequent looming danger of fascism and war. To confront the coming test of strength the democratic front will have to have not only a sound political program, but also the strongest possible organization. Indeed, in such a close and hard-fought election as 1940 promises to be, the question of organization may well be a decisive one. Time is short and the necessity is pressing.

It is the purpose of this article to point out the general direction that the necessary organizational better-

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ments of the democratic forces should take, to indicate what progress is being made in this respect, and to discuss some of the principal organizational problems confronting us.

OUR GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL TASKS

The great job before us is to strengthen and unite the scattered battalions of the democratic front forces. Many of the existing mass organizations—trade unions, farmers' cooperatives, women's organizations, etc.—contain only a fraction of their potential memberships. Moreover, they are only loosely in touch with each other. They need strengthening in every direction and linking up into a solid and active political movement. To do this requires, in addition to practical political programs, effective organization work. And in carrying through this organization work we have to overcome three major obstacles: (a) the widespread political apathy still prevalent among the masses, (b) the demagogy of the reactionaries, and (c) the sabotage of the tory enemies within the ranks of the democratic front forces.

A. *Mass apathy.* That, despite the great mass awakening under the New Deal, there is still a great extent of political apathy and inertia among the masses is indicated by the fact that of the 67,288,952 eligible voters, according to the 1930 census, only 39,816,522 (58 per cent) voted in 1932, and 45,647,117 (67 per cent) in 1936. Even when disfranchised Negroes, unemployed, etc., are discounted, there remain many millions that are politically inactive. Very largely these nonvoters are proletarians, farmers and city petty-bourgeois. These millions are especially exposed to the wiles of reactionaries. Apathy is also indicated by the several millions of workers and farmers who, from traditionalism or political sluggishness, vote for the Republicans.

It is of elementary importance, therefore, to bring these huge masses into active support of the New Deal. Here good organization, as well as correct political policies, is fundamental. Organization literally grips hold of the indifferent, the sluggards, waverers, half-hearted and confused elements and swings them into action. Winning even a small percentage of these inactive ones may be decisive in the elections. This can surely be accomplished by better organization methods.

B. *Reactionary demagogy.* With bad economic conditions prevailing generally and with mass unrest and confusion widespread, there is the acute danger of large masses of toilers being misled by the demagogy of the Republican Party and its stooges, the Coughlins, Townsends, Norman Thomases, etc. The first great steps against this menace are a good political program and an effective agitation in its behalf among the masses. But the masses will not be adequately protected against demagogy until they are actually brought into the various organizations making up the democratic front, or at least drawn closely under their immediate influence. To defeat the Republicans, the democratic front must know how to combat their demagogy. In this connection, to underestimate the importance of solid organization would be fatal.

C. *Sabotage from within.* The question of strengthening the organization

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of the democratic front forces within the Democratic Party becomes a serious matter, in view of the firm grip and sabotage of such elements as the conservative A. F. of L. officials, the Southern Bourbons, the Tammany reactionaries, the Hague clique and many similar groups. The warfare of these elements, who are bitterly hostile to the New Deal, will become more acute and dangerous as 1940 approaches. The fate of the New Deal election struggle will depend upon the extent to which these tories are isolated from the masses who follow the Democratic Party.

OLD METHODS AND NEW

In order to cope with these great problems of apathy, demagogy and sabotage it is necessary to make radical departures from the practices of the two old parties out of which the democratic front is very largely being born. Here let us briefly indicate what some of these changes are.

Political education. The two big parties have long based their mass organization upon systems of patronage, "fixing," etc., rather than upon political programs and discussion. Their agitation, besides being anti-working class in character, has always been superficial and demagogic. In the lower units of the parties, the district, ward and precinct organizations, where the "fixing" and "machine" practices rule supreme, there is ordinarily, outside of flurries around election times, virtually no political discussion.

All this should be drastically changed in democratic front political formations. Real political discussion must be—is beginning to be—developed around the vital needs of the people. Vigorous strides need to be taken towards liquidating political illiteracy among the masses. This educational work should extend down into the lowest units of these democratic front formations. Every ward, club, or branch should be made a center of continuous mass education, carried on with all the modern technique of intense agitation and propaganda.

Patronage. The distribution of appointive jobs — municipal, county, state and federal—has always been a central foundation of the old parties' mass mobilization system. Whole groups of voters are clustered about each political job. Big machines are built on this basis, and the two parties are constantly torn with struggles over the rich prizes.

To overcome this evil patronage practice will be a big but necessary task in democratic front political formations. Appointive political jobs will continue for an indefinite time yet, and the way to handle their distribution is for the democratic front party to take firm responsibility, and not to leave them to the personal control of political overlords. More and more in this matter, the principles of political reliability and efficiency, instead of mere machine expediency, must be insisted upon.

Political fixing. Political favoritism is another basic practice of conservative Democratic and Republican Party mass organizations. It has innumerable manifestations, such as favoring certain city contractors, facilitating the granting of questionable building permits, interceding for arrested persons, bringing about civil

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service promotions, "fixing" automobile tickets, securing naturalization papers and peddling permits, changing birth certificates, effecting promotions in school, having people admitted to city hospitals, getting workers jobs in industries and placing others on relief rolls. All these practices are vote-getting devices and are highly conducive to graft. The whole "fixing" system is extremely important in old party machine-building, with literally hundreds of thousands of people, especially the foreign-born, being affected by them yearly in all big cities. The Tammany, Hague, Kelly-Nash and similar old party organizations have such practices organized to a high degree.

Democratic front political formations must eradicate this pernicious system. Political graft, great and petty, must be stopped. The solution of the problem of political fixing is for the democratic front party to see to it that the various people's mass organizations and the municipal departments in the community work well, not for favored individuals, but for the welfare of the community as a whole. Especially must this be the case with the city welfare services. The new type of political mass organization will succeed, not by disregarding the pleas of the masses for effective service, but by being even more responsive to them than the old party machines have been. Every ward club, as well as higher party unit, will have to be literally a grievance committee of the people. It must stimulate the growth of trade unions and other democratic mass organizations in its locality; it must fight militantly against city official bureaucracy and make every public service in its locality function effectively for the masses. This is a vital point in mass political organization.

Vice and crime. The exploitation of prostitution, gambling and crime generally has long been an important prop of the old party machines. This is closely bound up with ballot-box stuffing, vote-buying and repeating, and other such practices. Democratic front political formations will, of course, have to exclude all such corruption. The democratic front party, nationally and locally, however, must pay close attention to the administration of justice—to see to it that the masses get necessary legal advice, that prison conditions are humane, that the parole system works properly, etc. It must especially take precautions to prevent the growth of juvenile delinquency.

Social activities. The old parties understand the political value of cultivating social activities among the masses. Hence, their many ward "chowders," picnics, dances, etc. The democratic front organizations must surpass them by developing social activities on a far greater and better scale. Every ward club should not only be a vital social center itself, but should also see to it that all the playgrounds, sports activities, etc., in its community are raised to the highest possible level of development.

Finance and organization. The old parties are also bad mentors on these elementary matters. Their practices of soliciting employers, demanding "kick-backs" from government employees and other dubious methods of money raising need to give way to organized systems of dues-paying, per

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capita tax collection, etc. Likewise, the political organizations of the democratic front must take on really a mass character, instead of their present skeleton forms. The committees, from top to bottom, must be made broad and democratic, not mere cliques of political hacks, and the lower units should actually be mass bodies.

The new type mass political organizations that are characteristic of the growing democratic front—such as the American Labor Party, Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, Washington Commonwealth Federation, Labor's Non-Partisan League, progressive sections of the Democratic Party, etc.—are generally developing along the new lines of political work that I have indicated. They are raising the political consciousness of the masses by systematic education, and they are introducing many new methods of activity and organization. They also have changed attitudes towards patronage, "fixing," vice, etc. But they still are afflicted with many hangovers from the bad practices of the two old parties. The whole subject of mass political organization work, therefore, needs very much to be studied carefully in detail—from the ground up—and its practical lessons learned.

MASS ORGANIZATION OF THE PEOPLE

To combat political reaction successfully, not only should the democratic front adopt the new methods of work briefly indicated above, but it must also, upon a scale and with a thoroughness quite new in this country, nationally organize the millions of workers, farmers, professionals, women, youth, Negroes, peace advocates and other democratic population groups. These must be organized around their own specific programs and demands and their solid battalions grouped about the democratic front political formations. The situation today demands that literally the whole toiling people be organized for struggle against militant and powerful reaction.

The New Deal leaders have sensed this new necessity to organize the broadest ranks of the people and they have directly stimulated and encouraged such organization. This is true nationally, as well as in the states and cities. Previous administrations have been at best only tolerant of popular mass organization, when they were not definitely hostile to it. While administrations in the past were alert to exploit existing mass organizations by drawing their conservative top leaders into election committees, etc., they were careful not to facilitate the growth of the trade unions and other people's organizations.

But the Roosevelt administration has followed a policy of stimulating the growth of mass organizations. This important fact lends a distinctive character to the Roosevelt government. Let us cite briefly a few major instances of this general trend.

A. *Labor.* Through Section 7 (a) of the National Recovery Act and later through the Wagner Act, as well as through the operation of various boards and committees, the Roosevelt administration has aided in the organization of great numbers of workers into trade uinons. Roosevelt's

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recent appeals to the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. to establish trade union unity were also an unprecedented step in the same direction of strengthening the trade unions.

B. *Farmers.* Mass organization of the farmers has also been stimulated by the legal recognition and encouragement of marketing cooperatives; by establishing popular referenda to determine marketing quotas of rice, cotton, tobacco, corn and wheat; by authorizing local farmers' committees to regulate land conservation; and by directly organizing medical cooperatives in the West for emergency medical aid for farmers, etc.

C. *Youth.* Besides constructing the Youth Administration, New Deal national and state leaders have repeatedly endorsed and participated in the deliberations of such youth movements as the American Youth Congress, American Students Union, World Youth Congress, etc.

D. *Women.* Similar encouragement has been given to the mass organization of women, administration leaders having supported the conference of 1935 that created the Joint Committee for Women's Work. Also the Cause and Cure of War Committee, representing millions of women, has had much support from Mrs. Roosevelt and other prominent New Deal figures.

E. *Negroes.* The administration policy has also stimulated Negro mass organization. Secretary Ickes spoke at the recent National Negro Congress regional meeting in Baltimore; local New Deal leaders gave active support to the Southern Negro Youth Congress in Richmond, in February, 1937; Negroes were encouraged to participate in the big recent Southern Human Welfare Conference in Birmingham, etc.

F. *National groups.* Increasingly these groups are being brought into New Deal political activity on a mass scale, and thereby are stimulated to growth. A typical example was the big conference of Polish organizations during the recent Murphy election campaign in Michigan.

G. *Health.* It was through the administration that the recent National Health Conference was held. It comprised the representatives of many millions of people, and stimulated the vast popular movement around this vital issue.

H. *Peace.* The New Deal leaders have also encouraged mass organization around this central question. At the Pan-American Conference in Buenos Aires, President Roosevelt called for the organization of a great people's peace movement in the United States; since then administration figures have actively participated in such broad, popular peace movements as the Committee for Concerted Peace Efforts.

I. *The South.* Roosevelt leaders, national and local, participated in organizing the very popular movement that produced the recent Southern Conference for Human Welfare, which adopted a broad progressive program embracing wide economic, political, cultural and social needs of the Southern masses.

The huge new and vigorous popular movements are full of the greatest political significance in the fight to preserve and expand American

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democracy. With utmost skill and energy they should be developed to the maximum degree and extended to the most remote and undeveloped sections of the toiling masses. The organizational and ideological strengthening of the trade unions; the farmers', women's, youth, Negro, national group organizations; old age pension, health, peace, Southern and other people's movements; and their grouping solidly around the political formations of the growing democratic front is a decisive political question. The Roosevelt administration, while definitely favoring such mass movements, cannot be expected to (nor would it be desirable that it should) carry through directly the job of organizing them. That is the task of the masses themselves. The extent to which the latter rise to an understanding of this great work will largely determine whether the forces for progress or of reaction will be victorious in this country.

PEOPLE'S LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCES

A broad form of political mass organization of great significance is the people's legislative conference. This type of movement, like the mass organizations we have just been considering, is not, strictly speaking, a novelty, but, also like them, its present broad scope, key role, and deep political content lend it distinctly a character of newness. New Dealers and progressive forces generally are increasingly supporting this new and significant form of organization.

People's legislative conferences, local, state and national, are vitally important because they link together into broad mass movements around urgent immediate demands the various separate battalions of the toiling masses: trade unions, farmers' organizations, peace societies, church groups, organizations of women, Negroes, youth, small taxpayers, national groups, etc., etc. They build solid mass foundations for the growing democratic front.

People's legislative conferences have recently been held on a state basis in Washington, Tennessee, Montana, Utah and Arkansas, and in a number of cities and Congressional districts. Various others are in preparation. The most important one so far was the big Southern Conference for Human Welfare in Birmingham, Alabama, held in November, composed of outstanding progressive delegates from every state in the South.* It is also reported that prominent progressive leaders will hold a people's legislative conference on a national scale this year.

The people's legislative conferences are both specific and general. That is, they may be built around either single issues, such as peace, unemployment, health, or housing, or around broad legislative programs. The conference in the South had a program embracing the wide scope of farm tenancy, constitutional rights, labor relations, unemployment, prison reform, credit, housing, health, suffrage, race relations, youth problems, freight rate differentials, etc. As Comrade Gene Dennis stated in

* For an analytical account of this conference the reader is referred to the article by Comrade Rob Hall, in the January, 1939, issue of *The Communist*.—*The Editors.*

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his report to the National Committee in December:

"The essential points of the program for such a movement—a democratic front legislative movement for recovery, security, democracy and peace—are, as we have emphasized previously, already set forth in one form or another in the progressive features of the policies of President Roosevelt, in the legislative programs of the state Democratic Party platforms in Washington, California and Michigan; in the legislative program of the C.I.O., many State Federations of Labor, L.N.P.L. and the Workers Alliance; in the programs of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the Washington Commonwealth Federation, the American Youth Congress, the National Negro Congress and the Southern Human Welfare Conference in a number of peace organizations, such as the American League for Peace and Democracy and the Committee for Concerted Peace Efforts, and are presented in a more rounded out and complete manner in the election platform of our National Committee."

The importance of the people's legislative conferences is manifold. They rouse the political consciousness of the masses and organize them for action; they offer a splendid means for the masses to formulate their political demands and to bring pressure by lobbying, election action, and otherwise, upon the legislatures to enact them and upon officials to enforce them; they are a powerful instrument for strengthening all the mass organizations that go to make up the democratic front and to break down their individual narrownesses. People's legislative conferences are in no sense rivals of or substitutes for the mass party, but are powerful supporters of it by grouping about it the organized armies of the toilers.

In the fight to organize the democratic front, to overcome mass political apathy, to immunize the people against reactionary demagogy, to render ineffective the sabotage of tory enemies from within and thus to defeat the forces of reaction, people's legislative conferences possess vast potentialities. To what extent these possibilities will be realized depends upon the degree to which progressive leaders generally come to understand the vital significance of this new type of political organization and, more concretely, upon the measure that the various conferences, through their permanent committees of action and continuations committees, vigorously extend their work of political education and organization, with every modern device of propaganda and mobilization, throughout the uttermost reaches of the toiling masses.

SOME NATIONAL PROBLEMS

In strengthening the growing democratic front forces a number of new and urgent national problems present themselves, of which the following are among the most important:

A. *Increasing the political role of labor.* Organized labor, which is constantly growing more active politically, must become the leading force and very backbone of the democratic front. But in order to do this it is necessary without delay to heal the split between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. This break, criminally provoked by the A. F. of L. reactionaries, dangerously weakens the whole cause of democracy in the United States by demoralizing both organized and unorganized workers, and by alienating the farmers and middle class ele-

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ments. If the split is not healed by cooperative movements between the two organizations around specific political issues and by eventual amalgamation it may well be the fatal means of handing the country over to reaction in 1940.

Organized labor must also develop much more organization and activity politically. The C.I.O. is leading the way towards this in Labor's Non-Partisan League and, generally, by greater participation of its unions in political action. Especially important in this respect also is the American Labor Party and the technique it uses for mobilizing Labor's forces independently. A further striking example of the new political activity by Labor was the $500,000 donation of the United Mine Workers of America to the Roosevelt 1936 election fund. Various A. F. of L. unions move more slowly in the same general direction; but there is great need to speed the tempo all along the line. Trade union unity is the key to this question, as well as to the advance of the whole democratic front.

B. *The alliance between the workers and farmers.* This is basic to the political welfare of the people. Reaction uses every means to drive a wedge between the workers and farmers, who are natural political allies. This splitting tactic should be countered by energetic efforts to link these two great bodies of producers in cooperative political action and organization. Roosevelt and Lewis have correctly stressed the necessity for this worker-farmer unity, and the urgency of the political situation imperatively demands it. But a serious obstacle is the traditional trade union narrowness on this question. The A. F. of L. is most afflicted with this spirit of aloofness towards the farmers, and serious remnants of it are also to be found even in the C.I.O., the A.L.P. and progressive sections of the Democratic Party.

Such dangerous sectarianism should be speedily liquidated and every effort made to bring the workers and farmers together into active working political alliance. The people's legislative conferences constitute a potent means to this end. They should be supplemented by the trade unionists and farmers holding conferences together on local, state and national bases, so that they may become better acquainted with each other's problems, coordinate their programs and liquidate the misunderstandings that the common enemy is so assiduously cultivating between them.

C. *The progressive Congressional bloc:* The basic class realignment that is now going on in the United States reflects itself inside the two great capitalist parties. Reactionary and progressive wings are forming swiftly within both of them, and they are generating sharp internal struggles. Alert to this new situation, the reactionaries, who have their main seat in the Republican Party, are bending all efforts to develop an alliance with the tory Democrats and to split the Democratic Party. The progressives, who have their principal political stronghold in the Democratic Party, are countering this splitting tactic by isolating the reactionaries within (or without) their own party ranks and by developing a practical work-

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ing alliance with the nascent progressive wing in the Republican Party. The progressive Democratic-Republican bloc, built around the general objectives of the New Deal, begins to take form, not only in Congress, but also in the various state legislatures and city councils. Struggles around pending legislation in Congress and in the states provide an immediate platform and the people's legislative conferences facilitate the whole development. The extent to which this progressive bloc is developed may be decisive in the 1940 elections and in the Congress that will come out of them.

D. *National coordination of the democratic front political forces.* This necessity constantly becomes more urgent. The measures already indicated above—intensifying the political role of labor, cementing the alliance between the workers and formers, and building the progressive Congressional bloc—are long steps in the right general direction. But they must be supplemented by get-together movements on a still more inclusive basis, such that will definitely link up in program and action the various political, economic and social mass organizations of the people.

The people's political movement, the democratic front, is now developing mainly through the crystallization of the New Deal forces within the Democratic Party. There is also the progressive current inside the Republican Party, in addition to such independent political formations as the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the Wisconsin Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation and the American Labor Party of New York. The great task is to coordinate all these various currents and organizations, so that the whole movement may go forward with ever greater unity and power.

But here the third party danger enters in. This is the tendency to seek short-cuts to the establishment of a great party of toilers. This tactic is much used by demagogues to split and paralyze the people's forces. Fresh in mind is the Coughlin-Townsend-Lemke Union Party attempt to defeat Roosevelt in 1936. And now there is the LaFollette National Progressive Party to threaten the solidarity of the masses. The short-cut third party danger will become more acute with the approach of the 1940 elections, with their complicated political lineups.

The traditional slogan "For a Farmer-Labor Party" is proving historically correct, as the masses are now undoubtedly moving towards the development of a great political combination along these general lines. But this slogan must not be mechanically applied. Its goal cannot be arrived at by the offhand launching of third party movements. At present, as we have seen, the course of the people's political growth goes principally through the consolidation of the New Deal forces within the Democratic Party. Whether this movement will result finally in rejuvenating the Democratic Party into a great party of the people, or culminate in a deep third-party split remains to be determined by future events. In the meantime, however, it is fundamentally necessary to avoid the launching of artificial third parties, which can only

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split the people's ranks and play into the hands of reaction.

SUMMARY

In the foregoing, I have pointed out the fact that reactionary capitalism has developed new and effective means for enchaining the masses and that this makes it imperative for the democratic front also fundamentally to improve its system of mass organization. I have also indicated the new attitudes necessary towards such questions as political mass education, patronage, political "fixing," vice and crime, and local organizing and election methods. Furthermore, I have pointed out the problems of the mass organization of the people into trade unions, farmers' organizations, etc., and I have touched upon the role of the people's legislative conferences. I have also dealt briefly with such urgent national problems as strengthening Labor's political role, cementing the alliance between the workers and farmers, building a progressive Congressional bloc, and the third-party question. Finally, I have given at least an indication of the progress that is being made in developing the necessary new organization technique by the various forces that go to make up the democratic front.

From all this it is clear that we are witnessing a gradual transformation by the democratic front of the traditional methods and forms of political mass work. But the tempo of development is dangerously slow. The strength of reaction and the readiness with which it grasps at new means to confuse and mislead the masses, render it imperative that the democratic front forces make greater haste in modernizing their own working methods. The whole matter of improving the system of political mass organization should be carefully studied and its lessons applied diligently and with dispatch. In this task the Communist Party, with its Marxian training, militant spirit and wide mass following, bears a great responsibility.

"The present general movement throughout the world for the educational rearmament of the Communist Parties, and of the labor movement—the movement to master theory—is not disconnected from the world crisis. It is because the peoples of the world approach another great turning point in history that the working class vanguard, the international Communist movement, taking up the task of leading the popular masses through the threatening storms to victory, looks to its preparedness, examines its equipment, begins systematic rearmament. And our arms for the coming struggles consist first and last of our arsenal of theory, of Marxism-Leninism."—Earl Browder, *Theory As a Guide to Action*.

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UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE WORKS PROGRAM IN 1939

BY CHARLES FLETCHER and JOHN VANCE

FROM the first day of the 76th Congress, the W.P.A. and the federal relief program have been a central target for the attacks of the reactionaries. The vicious reactionary campaign against the W.P.A. during the debate on the deficiency appropriation was announced by Representative Woodrum, leading W.P.A. opponent, as a curtain raiser for the major reactionary battle to cripple the W.P.A. permanently.

President Roosevelt has indicated that the progressives have no intention of sacrificing the needs of the unemployed to the reactionaries without a battle. In particular, the C.I.O. and the Workers Alliance are demanding substantial increases in the W.P.A. appropriation.

The importance of relief expenditures for recovery was indicated by the recession which followed the reduction of governmental expenditures in 1937 and the recovery during their resumption in 1938. However, it is not the purpose of this article to discuss the relation of relief expenditures to recovery, which has been treated elsewhere.* Rather, the primary purpose is to demonstrate the need for increased relief expenditures solely on the basis of the needs of the unemployed masses.

This will involve a consideration of the following factors: (1) The failure of employment to keep pace with the rise in the general level of business activity since 1932; (2) The rise in the proportion of the unemployed requiring relief simply to avoid starvation with the continuance of mass unemployment over several years; (3) The dangerously low level of relief budgets and W.P.A. wages which constitute a menace to the health and morale of a large section of the population; (4) The extent to which monopoly capital has succeeded in shifting the burden of unemployment relief to the working class.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTION

The failure of unemployment to decline in proportion to the rise in business activity has been one of the outstanding characteristics of the recovery period from 1933 to 1937. In the fall of 1937 business activity almost reached the 1929 level. But even at this peak of recovery there were still 8,281,000 unemployed, according to A. F. of L. conservative estimates, or over four times as many unemployed as in 1929.

* Roger Bacon, "W.P.A. and Recovery," *National Issues* (January, 1939), pp. 13-14.

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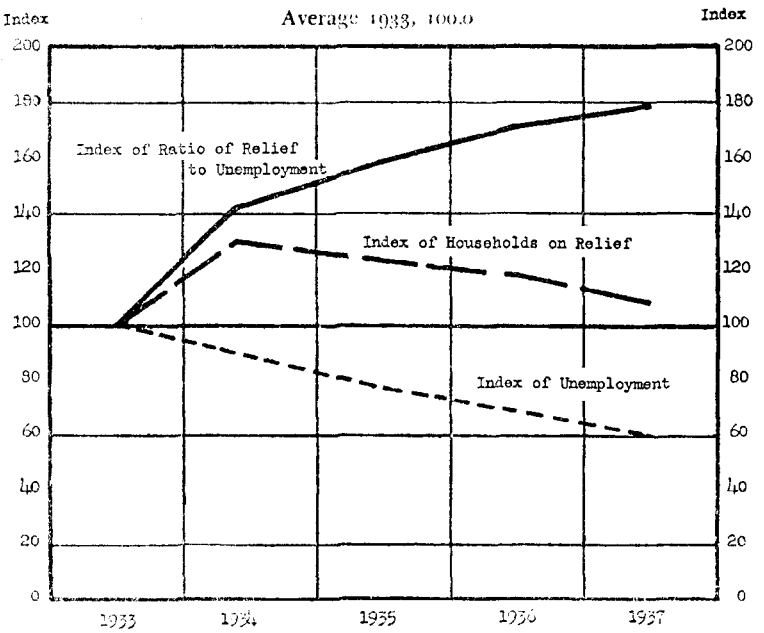
The reactionaries have attempted to prove that New Deal policies were in some mysterious fashion responsible for the failure of unemployment to decline to the 1929 level. The real reasons for the present level of unemployment are plain for those who really want to know. First, a combination of increased mechanization and speed-up has so increased labor productivity that fewer workers are required in 1939 to produce the output of 1929. Furthermore, the number of persons seeking work has been steadily increasing since 1929, both because of the natural increase in population and because economic pressure has forced new sections of the population into the labor market. Thus, government statisticians reported that even if there were no increase in the productivity of labor between 1935 and 1937 "in order for unemployment in 1937 to recede to the 1929 level, the nation's output of goods and services would have to be approximately 20 per cent higher than in 1929." * Under capitalism, then, production must achieve ever higher levels in order to keep unemployment at a minimum. For the immediate future, it seems extremely unlikely that there can be an improvement in business of sufficient magnitude to make any significant reduction in the number of unemployed needing W.P.A. jobs.

RATIO OF RELIEF TO UNEMPLOYMENT
Yearly Averages



* W.P.A. National Research Project, *Unemployment and Increasing Productivity*, Letter of transmittal.

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THE INCREASE IN THE PROPORTION OF THE UNEMPLOYED REQUIRING RELIEF

At the same time, the proportion of the unemployed requiring relief is increasing steadily. The Emergency Relief Bureau of New York City explains as follows a 40 per cent rise in the relief load between 1934 and 1935, although there was no decline in factory employment:

"At a given time not all of the unemployed are on relief. Many workers have resources in the form of insurance savings, small property or credit sufficient to support themselves and their families for a considerable period following the loss of employment. Such assets become exhausted with the passage of time. Unless employment appears, the jobless worker whose resources have vanished must apply for relief. In a period of static employment when there are no new job opportunities, the relief load is bound to rise because of the reservoir of unemployed not on relief." *

That this is also the experience throughout the country is indicated by the increase in the ratio of unemployed on relief to total unemployment. In 1933 there were 35 *families* receiving relief for each 100 unemployed *persons,* while in 1937 there were 65 families receiving relief for each 100 unemployed persons.** That is, as is illustrated in the chart on page 148, between 1933 and 1937 there was a rise of 80 per cent in the number of families receiving relief in relation to the number of unemployed. Thus more and more the unemployed have been forced to turn to relief as all available resources of the unemployed themselves and of their friends and relatives have been squeezed out to pay the cost of the crisis.

We will examine later the amount of small savings and insurance policies used up in this way to pay the cost of unemployment. For the present, we want to indicate the number whose resources were drained to pay this cost, and the result in terms of the immediacy of the need for relief of those who become unemployed today.

In considering the effects of unemployment, we must note first that a much larger number of workers are affected in any given year than is indicated by the figure for the average number of unemployed during that year. For example, the A. F. of L. estimate of the average number of unemployed workers during 1932 was 13,182,000. But the number of individual workers who experienced some unemployment during the year was from one and one-half to two times as high. If we add to this the number of workers who were employed only part-time, it seems certain that not less than 26,000,000 workers, or 70 per cent of the total labor force, suffered some unemployment in 1932.*

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* *The New York Times,* November 14, 1938.

** Based upon A. F. of L. estimates of unemployment and number of unduplicated households on relief as reported in *Journal of the American Statistical Association,* June, 1937, p. 363.

* This figure is based in part upon the distribution of unemployment durations and indicators of the extent of partial unemployment derived from the following reports of surveys and censuses of unemployment:

Census Bureau: *Census of Unemployment, 1930* (for the United States); *Special Census of Unemployment, January, 1931* (for 19 of the largest cities); *Census of Total and Partial Unemployment, November, 1937* (for the United States).

Pennsylvania State Emergency Relief Ad-

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Thus, a substantial majority of those who were formerly gainfully employed suffered a loss of all or part of their personal resources through total or partial unemployment in 1932. And in each year since 1932 not less than 30 per cent of the nation's labor force have been compelled to use up all or part of their resources because of unemployment. The exhaustion of the insignificant material resources of the workers through unemployment has affected a much larger proportion of the labor force than would be indicated by figures on average unemployment.

The hardest hit by the crisis were, of course, those who were without employment for long periods. On the basis of the 1930 Census of Unemployment for the United States and of state and local surveys of unemployment made since 1930, we have been able to make estimates of the number of workers unemployed for various lengths of time.* The indications are that, while in 1930 there were only about 110,000 persons who had been continually unemployed for more than a year, in 1934 their number was approximately 6,000,000. It appears, also, that in 1934 there were over 4,000,000 workers who had been unemployed for more than two years and 2,500,000 who had been unemployed for more than four years. For these workers the exhaustion of personal resources, mainly small savings accounts, insurance policies and equities in homes, was, of course, virtually complete.

Employment in recent years, even during the period of recovery in 1936 and 1937, has not been sufficiently stable to permit the accumulation of any substantial volume of new savings. Today, when unemployment strikes, workers must turn almost immediately to relief. In those states where unemployment compensation laws are operating, there may be a short interval of support from that

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ministration: *Census of Employable Workers in Urban and Rural Non-Farm Areas, 1934* (1934).

Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries: *Census of Unemployment of Massachusetts.*

Michigan State Emergency Welfare Commission: *Michigan Census of Population and Unemployment.*

Washington State Emergency Relief Administration: *Occupational Characteristics of Unemployed Persons in Cities of 11,000 or more population.*

Federal Emergency Relief Administration: *Occupational Characteristics of Relief and Non-Relief Population in Dayton, Ohio.* Research Bulletin, Series I, No. 3.

Kentucky Department of Labor: *Louisville Employment Survey.*

New York State Department of Labor: *Unemployment in Buffalo,* Special Bulletins Nos. 163, 167, 172 and 179.

W.P.A. National Research Project and Industrial Research Department of the U. of P.: *Recent Trends in Employment and Unemployment in Philadelphia.*

While the average number of unemployed was 13,182,000, the A. F. of L. estimates indicate that as many as 14,240,000 were unemployed in a single month. But these are only the completely unemployed. The surveys mentioned above uniformly indicate that approximately one-half as many more are partially unemployed. In the month of the worst unemployment of 1932, then, there were about 7,120,000 partially unemployed workers; and the total of completely and partially unemployed workers was 21,350,000.

But that number, 21,350,000, is only for the month of December, 1932. It is estimated that there were at least 5,500,000 who had been unemployed at some time during the year but who were not counted because they had been re-employed before December. This gives the total figure of over 26,000,000.

* These estimates are based on data in surveys and censuses noted in the foregoing footnote.

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source before relief is necessary.* In Pennsylvania, the reports on unemployment compensation point sharply to the immediacy of the unemployed workers' need for relief. There is a waiting period of three or more weeks before one is eligible for unemployment compensation. Fifty-seven per cent of the workers who obtained relief in Pennsylvania after their unemployment compensation ended had been forced to apply for relief before the receipt of the first unemployment compensation check.** This shows that a substantial majority of the workers were unable to exist on their own resources for the few weeks prior to the receipt of the first check.

Another indication of the exhaustion of those resources which had previously enabled a large part of the unemployed to avoid application for relief is the large number of workers applying for relief who have never before been on the rolls. (In Pennsylvania, these new applicants constituted 31 per cent of those certified for relief in the months of June and August, 1938.)* Similarly, the W.P.A. reports that in all recent months over 50 per cent of the workers assigned to projects had never previously been employed by W.P.A. It is evident that the instability of employment and the years of crisis are adding daily to the number without any resources whatsoever.

Thus, in 1939, the workers are much less able to withstand unemployment than at the beginning of the crisis in 1929. Also, a much larger proportion of the unemployed require relief than at any time in the past. Therefore, even if there is no increase in unemployment, there will be a need for an enlarged appropriation for W.P.A. and for relief to meet the increased dependence of the unemployed on public relief.

WHO HAS PAID THE COST OF UNEMPLOYMENT?

The extent to which the burden of this cost of unemployment has fallen on those least able to pay has not been generally recognized even among progressives. It is safe to say that the unemployed themselves, relatives, and friends, have to date contributed the most, even in terms of actual money, toward paying the cost of supporting the unemployed.

However small the resources of the workers, farmers and middle class may have been individually, and even collectively, in relation to the national wealth, the draining of those resources to pay the cost of unemployment probably constituted the principal source of funds for "relief" through-

* The Communist Party pioneered in the campaign for unemployment compensation, and its adoption even in the present unsatisfactory form represents a major victory for progressives and the labor movement. However, the attempt to represent unemployment compensation in its present form as a substitute for unemployment relief and W.P.A. is a deliberate distortion. Its operation in twenty-eight benefit-paying states points, when operative in all states, to a contribution of unemployment relief in 1938 of approximately $600,000,000. Since part of this amount is paid to workers who would not be eligible for relief, it is believed that approximately $400,000,000 of unemployment compensation will take the place of about so much relief.

** For the months of February to August, 1938, *Pennsylvania Public Assistance Statistics*, August, 1938, p. 9.

* *Pennsylvania Public Assistance Statistics*, June, 1938, p. 5; August, 1938, p. 6.

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out the depression. The relief regulations are designed to make sure that the unemployed worker and his relatives contribute the maximum possible amount toward the cost of his unemployment. When the last of his savings is used up, his insurance policy surrendered for cash, in short, when the last slight vestiges of security are gone, then, and only then, is the unemployed worker permitted to receive governmental aid.

That the government's expenditure for unemployment relief has run into several billion dollars is well known, for the reactionary press is continually employing this fact as a bogey to frighten its readers away from the New Deal. There are, of course, no records of the expenditures of the people to place alongside the figure for the relief appropriations of the government. We must be content with a few scattered facts which indicate the magnitude of the people's direct monetary contribution to the cost of aiding the unemployed. But the systematic draining of the resources of the unemployed and their relatives probably yielded more in actual money than was contributed for formal relief by all the government agencies combined.

The toll of savings during the years which marked the full flowering of Hoovervilles and soup lines is shown in the Federal Reserve Bank reports. They show that the number of savings accounts declined by 16,000,000 between 1929 and 1933 while the the amount of deposits shrank by $8,000,000,000.*

Insurance policies were another resource drawn on by unemployed workers. Between 1930 and 1936, about 6,000,000 more ordinary policies were lapsed and surrendered than would have been the case under the conditions existing in the 1920's.* (Industrial insurance holders suffered far worse than ordinary policyholders. In a single year, 1933, more than 20,000,000 industrial policies were lapsed and surrendered.) About $7,000,000,000 was obtained from all surrendered insurance policies during these years.** Thus, it was the workers, small farmers and the middle class, not monopoly capitalists, who paid the cost of the crisis; paid it out of small savings, from aban-

* The $8,000,000,000 mentioned is the decline in the volume of savings deposits between 1929 and 1933. Banking prospects in 1932 and early 1933 were so gloomy that many business men transferred a large volume of demand deposits to savings accounts because banks specializing in the latter type of deposits were generally safer. Funds obtained from the liquidation of stock holdings and withdrawals from business were also placed in savings deposits because of the difficulty in finding a safe field for investment during the depths of the depression. If these transfers had not occurred the reports of the Comptroller of Currency would doubtless have revealed the full amount of withdrawals by the regular small savings depositors. Because of the same forces, the decline in the number of savings accounts also is an understatement of the number of depositors who closed their accounts. It is even greater here because the larger depositors were compelled by savings bank regulations to open accounts in two or more banks. Thus, the number of individual accounts was considerably greater than the number of depositors.

* Based upon statistics of lapses and surrenders as a per cent of the average number of policies in force of twenty-eight of the largest life insurance companies as reported in *Spectator*, September 3, 1936. The percentage for 1928-1929 was subtracted from each succeeding year and applied to the number of ordinary policies in force.

** *Spectator Insurance Year Book*, 1938, pp. 418-19. These figures exclude loans based

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doned insurance policies and in foreclosed homes and farms.

It was the working class itself which furnished virtually the only "relief agency" during the first years of the crisis. The New York City E.R.B. report* says of this period:

> "The conditions of doubling-up that were found were shocking. There usually was one wage-earner supporting two families and the income and living standards were below even the minimum subsistence relief budgets, which meant that such families were eligible for home relief right along."

That the small farmer, laboring under a mountain of mortgages, also contributed to this form of unnoticed relief through doubling up is evidenced by the return of unprecedented millions to the farms and villages during the depression.

In these obscure ways, the people, not monopoly capital, bore the cost of unemployment. Nor should it be overlooked that in so far as unemployment relief has been forthcoming from governmental agencies it has been financed to a considerable extent from taxes on the people least able to pay, through sales taxes, taxes on workers' homes and small farms, etc. Since this aspect of the question is more generally recognized, it is not necessary to deal with it extensively here; but it must be emphasized that this tax policy is, also, a part of the method by which monopoly pressure shifts the burden of unemployment costs onto the masses.

We have spoken thus far of the people's monetary contribution to the cost of unemployment and we have indicated the difficulties in measuring it. It is still more difficult to compute the cost of the crisis to the people in terms of broken homes; sickness and disease; reduced educational skill, and training opportunities. The effect of unemployment on health is indicated by the findings of the National Health Survey which show that relatively twice as many persons among the unemployed were suffering from sickness and disease in 1936 as among the employed workers.*

Thus, in hundreds of ways the people have carried the major share of the cost of the crisis. The necessity now is for adequate relief appropriations financed by taxes on the wealthy.

THE NEED FOR INCREASES IN W.P.A. WAGES AND RELIEF BUDGETS

We have shown in the preceding discussion that relief appropriations need to be increased even on the basis of the present standards of relief. However, it is impossible to continue at present standards of W.P.A. and general relief income without permanently impairing the health and morale of millions of persons. The W.P.A. has made a number of studies of the income necessary for the average family. The basic maintenance

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on policies which were later allowed to lapse. According to L. C. Parry, in a speech at the annual meeting of the American Economic Association in December, 1932, some $2,000,000,000 was loaned to policyholders in 1930, 1931 and 1932. Part of this was probably repaid and part later credited to surrenders, but one must expect a substantial part of the loans to result in ultimate lapses and therefore not be reported as payments to policyholders. Seven billion dollars, therefore, understates the amount drawn out in the depression.

*The New York Times, November 14, 1938.

* *National Health Survey*, Bulletin No. 7, p. 3.

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budget for the average family requires an income of $1,261 per year. The emergency budget, established by W.P.A. for the average family, calls for an income of $903 per year.* The W.P.A. officials responsible for these estimates indicate that both of these budgets are well below the "health and decency" level,** and that "followed over a long period, the practices called for in the emergency budget may prove harmful to both health and morale." *** The fact is, however, that the yearly income specified in the emergency budget is over 30 per cent higher than the average annual income of W.P.A. workers in 1937.**** This average hides the starvation income of such groups as the unskilled W.P.A. workers in Southern rural counties who receive only $252 per year, about one-quarter of the inadequate emergency budget.

The disparity between relief budgets and budgets designed to cover *all* the necessary expenses of a family is so great that comparison is ridiculous. However, a comparison between relief budgets and estimates of the cost of food *alone* for an average family is revealing. According to figures of the conservative Brookings Institute, adjusted to 1938 prices,***** the cost of food alone to provide an adequate diet for an average family for one year if purchased at moderate prices is $675. If the food necessary for an adequate diet were purchased in all cases at minimum cost, the cost for one year would be reduced to $385. Finally, the cost in 1938 for a restricted diet for the average family *for use in emergencies only* was $270 per year.

The average amount of general relief per family per year in the United States in June, 1938, was $278.* Thus, the average total budget per family was about equal to the emergency budget for food alone, as estimated by the economists of the Brookings Institute. The relief budget in 80 per cent of the states was less than $270 per year, the amount necessary to buy food alone when living on an emergency diet.**

It is evident that the continuance of these standards of relief constitutes a major menace to the health of a large section of the population. The solution indicated is an immediate expansion of the Works Program to place all of the unemployed on projects, and an increase in the monthly wage of W.P.A. workers. There must also be a sharp increase in the amount

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* W.P.A., *Intercity Differences in Cost of Living*, p. 124. The figures are in terms of 1935 prices.

** *Ibid.*, p. XIV.

*** W.P.A., *Quantity Budgets for Basic Maintenance and Emergency Standards of Living*, p. 3.

**** W.P.A., *Report on Progress of Works Program*, December, 1937, pp. 50-51.

***** Brookings Institute, *America's Capacity to Consume* (1929). p. 122.

The budgets are given in this study in 1929 prices and are for food per year; adequate diet at moderate cost, $800; adequate diet at minimum cost, $500; emergency diet, $350. Adjusted to the 1938 price level these figures become $675, $385 and $270 respectively.

* *Social Security Bulletin*, August, 1938, p. 43.

** In only one state, New York, was the average yearly income higher than $385, the yearly amount established as necessary to purchase at minimum cost the food for an adequate diet. In Mississippi, relief recipients had an annual income of $48 for each case on general relief. In one-quarter of the states reporting, the relief grant was less than $10 per month and in 25 of the 40 states reporting it was less than $15 per month.

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of relief for those actually unable to work on W.P.A. projects.

PUT AMERICA BACK TO WORK—SPEED RECOVERY!

Thus, the plight of the unemployed masses itself requires an extension of relief, even without reference to the effect that such an extension would have upon recovery. Actually, although we can speak separately of the problem of relieving the plight of the masses and the problem of recovery, they are part of the same problem, and the solution of one dovetails with the solution of the other. What is required, in addition to the appropriation of adequate funds to take care of the urgent needs of relief to the unemployed, is a rounded program of measures that would realize the slogan advanced by the Communist Party: Speed Recovery! Put America Back to Work!

This means using the wealth of the monopoly capitalists to extend the W.P.A. and P.W.A. into a long-range program of socially necessary public works, low-cost housing construction and cultural projects covering all the unemployed, along with a vast extension and improvement of unemployment compensation, old-age pensions and other forms of social insurance. This program can be properly financed only by taxation based upon ability to pay and especially by a sharp increase of the income and corporation taxes in the higher brackets.

"How many Americans, among them those who pride themselves upon their education, were thrown into panic and despair by the Munich betrayal! And the fascist powers counted upon just that as the main weapon for their further victories. But how quickly has the penetrating Marxist-Leninist theory enabled the international working class, and thereby the whole camp of world democracy, to begin gathering its forces even more solidly and broadly all-inclusive, to dissolve all panic and despair, and prepare for the more decisive battles ahead. The very defeats inflicted upon us by the Munich conspirators are transformed into weapons against them, the enemy is exposed before the eyes of the world in all his nakedness and is isolated from the masses of the people who, aroused as never before, begin to solidify their ranks for serious defense of democracy and peace."—Earl Browder, *Theory As a Guide to Action.*

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CLASS FORCES IN CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE

BY HARRISON GEORGE

THE penetration of capital into agriculture, whereby the "traditional" agrarian economy of the self-sufficing family farm is changed into capitalist production for the market, or "commercial" farming, is more marked in California than in any other section of the United States.

Monopoly in land has become more concentrated through outright ownership, often by foreclosure, or through control by debt; while at the same time agrarian capital intensified rationalization of production both by mechanization and by simple speed-up, in an attempt to overcome the "scissors"—the price handicap agricultural commodities suffer from in market exchange with commodities of highly monopolized manufacturing industry.

The expropriation of land as a natural resource in California, which took place largely after its seizure from Mexico, added to the large areas held under Spanish land grants, in addition to the great tracts later claimed by railroads (Southern Pacific) and grabbed by land thieves (Miller & Lux), created a base for land monopoly in big holdings not found elsewhere in American agriculture.

STRUCTURE OF CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE

It would be a mistake, of course, as Lenin has noted, to regard *intensive* capitalist development as a necessary corollary to these *extensive* holdings. The penetration of capital takes places regardless of the size or form of land holdings. Indeed, *intensive* capitalist farming began, as Lenin noted, on comparatively small-area fruit farms, and such small-area farms remain a factor. Also, much of the original large holdings was divided for sale to colonists from the East, though considerable part of this land has reverted to large holders through failure and foreclosure. And homestead farms, though not so great in proportionate number as in the Mid-West, have also been a factor in California. Yet large-area farms, taken together with concentrated control by finance capital of large areas in apparently independent small-size farms, dominate the state's agricultural economy and have given rapid impetus to the development of commercialized farming.

This predominance of large-area, capitalized farm holdings has produced the most far-reaching social and political consequences, which

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have largely been ignored by the progressive people's movement, including our own Party, and concealed on the other hand by the interested finance capital groups with which agrarian capital is so closely welded that the two are practically identical.

The predominance of the mass-production "outdoor factory" type of farm, and the fading economic importance of the self-sufficing "family farm" are phenomena whose significance is hidden, deliberately it would seem, by the statistics of the government census, which, as Lenin noted in his *Capitalism and Agriculture in the United States,* were even in 1910 given so stupidly that the most significant factors were entirely omitted.

The 1910 census, however, was far superior to those more recent, which omit the most vitally necessary data, such as capital investment per acre of improved land (wage labor used, implements, fertilizers, motor power, irrigation costs, etc.), while giving in great detail such trivialities as the "number of mule colts under two years of age."

Not only does analysis become extremely difficult when deprived thus of essential data, but such statistics serve the purpose of reaction by maintaining, in this era of mechanical power, the "horse-and-buggy-days" conception in the public mind of the "typical" farm as the family farm, and the "typical farmer" as one who "climbs the ladder" from wage worker on the farm to tenant farmer, then to mortgaged owner, and then to full owner, and, after a period of bucolic abundance, retirement full of years and contentment.

This wholly mythical picture of a mythical "average farmer" is further cultivated by the capitalist press, and is an illusion spread by agrarian capitalists, who take advantage of popular sympathy for the toiling farmer and the legal and social exemptions allowed the family farm (such as exemption from social security, workmen's compensation and wage-hour laws) to maintain the most barbarous exploitation in "outdoor factories."

Not only has California farming become predominantly a factory industry, but this development has outmoded, technically, the small family farm, which can be maintained only at the cost of technical degeneration (delapidation of buildings, increasingly poor machinery, lack of fertilization, hand labor instead of power, etc.) and human degradation in impoverished living standards for a majority of the farm population. Yet it is precisely this impoverishment that brings the farming question to life as one of the highest political importance.

Inadequate as the census statistics are, still some can be found to illustrate the process of change outlined above. Illustrative of the high capital values involved in California agriculture are the following:

In 1935, the average value of California farm land per acre was $76.40, compared to $31.16 for the United States generally. California has 2.3 per cent of the harvested crop land of the U.S.A.; but this represented 7 per cent of the value of all crop land in the nation.

Indicative of the completion of the colonization period is the steady reduction of the *average* acreage per farm, from 461.8 acres in 1880, to 202.4

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acres in 1935. At the same time, however, it is significant that the number of *latifundia* (large acreage) holdings, in tracts of *one thousand acres or over,* rose from 2,531 in 1880, to 5,255 in 1935; and that the number of holding *between five hundred and one thousand acres* increased from 3,108 in 1880, to 4,913 in 1935.

Proof of the simple monopoly of land in these big holdings is the fact that in 1935, the 5,255 farms of one thousand acres or over, while constituting only 3.5 per cent of the total number of farms, held 62.3 per cent of all farm land, 18,957,126 acres out of a total of 30,437,995 acres in all of California's farms. That these large holdings are not all mere livestock range, but are industrially important, is seen in the fact that this 3.5 per cent of the farms (of one thousand acres or more) possessed 29.4 per cent of all the land used for crops in 1934.

The relative importance of California agriculture to the nation's is seen in the fact that this one state produced $660,000,000 out of the $8,500,000,000 gross farm income in 1937. Further examination shows that, out of the 7,865 farms in the whole United States which produce values of $30,000 or more, 2,892, or 36.8 per cent, are located in California.

CAPITALIST NATURE OF CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE

Analysis of the internal character of the state's economy reveals the concentration of capital in few hands. Less than one-tenth, to be exact, 9.9 per cent of California farms, produce 53.3 per cent of the state's total crop value, while the small farms, which are 41.4 per cent of the total number of farms, produce only 5.9 per cent of the total crop value.

Further analysis gives the remarkable fact that only two per cent of the farms control 25.4 per cent of the productive acreage, turning out 28.5 per cent of the crop value, and (especially indicative of their capitalist character) pay 34.6 per cent of the total wages paid to farm labor.

The capitalistic nature of California farming is shown by the fact that, of all persons gainfully employed in agriculture in California (1930), 57.3 per cent were wage workers, compared with 26.1 per cent in the nation as a whole. And the growth of this capitalist character, as well as the relative decrease in family ownership and operation, is shown by the fact that, out of every 1,000 adult males in agriculture there were 300 more farm wage workers in 1930 than in 1880, while there were 232 fewer owners and 68 fewer tenants. In cotton, less than 5 per cent of the state's cotton farms are large-scale, but they pay 40.5 per cent of all wages paid to cotton labor. Only 7 per cent of all truck farms are large-scale, but they pay 56.4 per cent of all wages for hired labor in truck crops.

In California, we thus see a large proportion of very small farms, with a relatively very small number controlling colossal acreages, with a monopoly of the industrialized agriculture steadily squeezing out the small growers.

The biggest "farmer" in California is "California Lands, Inc.," controlled by the Bank of America and Trans-America. This "farmer" operates 500,000 acres of land scattered throughout

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the state, in peaches, prunes, grapes, potatoes, barley and hay. Its farm income in 1936 was $2,552,925.

Among others of the 10 per cent of "farmers" who control California agriculture are: Allan Hoover, son of Herbert Hoover, owning and operating the richest land in the Delta region and in San Joaquin; Herbert Fleischacker, banker and industrialist, also operating in the Delta and San Joaquin; Balfour-Guthrie, a British interest; the Kern County Land Co.; H. P. Garin, operating "lettuce factories" in Arizona, Salinas and Imperial Valley; Spreckels, Holly and Crystal sugar companies, monopolists of beet acreages; the Tagus Ranch, ostensibly owned and operated by the Merritts (of Minnesota steel trust fame) but reportedly controlled by Libby, McNeil & Libby; California Packing Corporation, which grows as well as cans; Borden's Milk Co.; the California Fruit Exchange; Roy Pike's "El Solyo Ranch" which is equipped with the most complete private arsenal; the Hotchkiss Ranch, with thousands of acres in cotton and a scheme of importing Negro labor from the Deep South; Harry Chandler of the *Los Angeles Times;* William Randolph Hearst, with his San Simeon Ranch that grew from a modest 30,000 acre affair to 300,000 acres by eviction of "squatters"; the Southern Pacific Railroad, with 2,500,000 acres in Southern California, much of which has been sold and foreclosed repeatedly; the Earl Fruit Company, owner of the 25,000 acre DiGiorgio Ranch which gave a barbarian banquet to the now *passé* Governor Merriam (this company also handles Eastern marketing); and the California Delta Farms, Inc., owned jointly by Crocker and Fleischacker (bankers).

These "farmers" own, rent, lease, and operate through managers or tenants. As capitalistic "farmers" they operate large areas which they do not own, but lease. Thus, the question of tenantry is entangled with the small family farmer who is a tenant, and the status of the latter is disentangled from statistics only with difficulty. The relationship of these land barons, with the land itself, is very faint. It is hard to discern where their "farming" operations leave off and their banking and industrial interests begin. Irrigation and power companies; land development and land selling companies; canning, packing, and shipping corporations; absentee land merchants such as the Security First National Bank, the California Equities Co., all are part and parcel of *one well-knit chunk of finance capital,* with its final control in Wall Street.

CLASS DIFFERENCES IN FARMING POPULATION

In the face of this vast combination of monopoly in land, banking capital and marketing organizations, the small family farmer has all the disadvantages of the individual wage worker, with no union protection, in a corporation factory. Except that in agriculture, the conflict of interests is disguised behind the formula that all are "farmers" and the magic of statistical "averages" places them all on the same level. That the "average" California farm is 202.4 acres in extent and has an "average" value of $15,466, tells one absolutely nothing as to the *class differences* within the farming population.

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Yet these differences are vital to understanding the social forces present. And, to attain perspective, since the Associated Farmers recklessly talk of inciting "the country against the cities," it is well to calculate where these generals are going to obtain their armies. To begin with, in 1930, out of the state's total population of 5,677,251, 73.3 per cent or 4,160,596 were urban; only 26.7 per cent (it was 32 per cent in 1920) or 1,516,655 was "rural"—though this includes the smaller towns, and only 10 per cent, or 620,506, actual farm population. (It is doubtful whether the 200,000 estimated farm migratory laborers are included in the census at all.) Moreover, between 1930 and 1935, "farm population" fell from 620,506 to 608,838, narrowing the percentage ratio of that category. While this predominance of population in urban centers is worth noting, it is not given here with any idea of minimizing the *political* importance of the farm population.

It is to be noted that, although the "farm population" fell off in this five-year period, the number of farms *increased* from 135,676 in 1930, to 150,360 in 1935. This would indicate a worsening of conditions for the family farm which drove some population into the cities, while the number of purely capitalist-operated farms on which wage labor, as distinct from family labor, is engaged, markedly *increased*.

Dealing with farms according to tenure, we must remember that, while colonization from the East by fairly moneyed settlers who purchased small farms held up the "normal" trend to push the small farmer "down the ladder" from owner to tenant, this virtually ceased by 1920, with the onset of the agrarian crisis, and the trend of tenancy upward began. Hence, we see the growth of tenancy beginning in the 1925 farm census, when 14.7 per cent of all farms were operated by tenants, to 18 per cent in 1930, and 21.7 per cent in 1935. We must remember, of course, that capitalist "tenant" farms may account for some of this growth of tenancy, though the trend to tenancy of family farms seems clear. Evidence, inconclusive but worth noting, of one phase of capitalist farming, is seen in the fact that, in 1935, out of the 150,360 farms, 14,119 were without dwellings.

But the growth of tenancy does not exhaust the evidence of impoverishment and dispossession of the family farmer. Formal statistics would seem to "prove" the opposite. For while in 1930, 71,216 California farms were mortgaged to a total of $573,452,000, this was "reduced" to only 67,444 farms with a total mortgage debt of $497,148,000 in 1935. It would appear that "prosperity" has allowed 3,772 farmers to pay off a mortgage debt of $76,304,000, or some $20,229 on the average. But we know that there was no such prosperity, and we must conclude that these 3,772 farmers—and from their average indebtedness one would conclude they were among the middle class farmers to a marked degree—lost their farms, that their debts were liquidated by foreclosure.

Nor can we foresee any hope for the remaining 67,444 mortgaged California farmers paying off their debts. Thus, to the 21.7 per cent of California farmers who are tenants, we must add (though tenancy and mort-

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gage may overlap in certain instances) the 44.1 per cent of mortgaged farmers in the state, who to all practical purposes have lost real ownership of the land they farm to the banks and finance companies. This leaves, roughly, only 34.2 per cent of California's farmers actually owning their farms. Truly, we Communists may point at capitalism as the thief that is stealing the farm from the farmer. Indeed, it is reported that, in the great, rich San Joaquin Valley, the "fruit basket of the nation," not over 150 farmers actually own their farms. In the presence of the Bank of America, the bogey of Bolshevism must lose its terror.

FARM FINANCING AND MARKETING

Capital credit, without which the farmer cannot farm, relentlessly encircles the small farmer in a web of debt, on which usury not infrequently at 28 per cent is charged in interest—by connivance of bankers with the past Merriam administration, and is openly used by the Bank of America to coerce small farmers into joining the Associated Farmers, to compel them to participate in vigilante terrorism and finally to dispossess them and throw them into the ranks of wage workers.

Hence the importance of the question of farm financing, which was dealt with in detail in a resolution of the California State Convention of the Communist Party, in order to mitigate the worst features of a system whose inherent evils can be ended only by socialism. These measures are of immediate importance, because, with any deepening of the present crisis, the small farmer is certain to be squeezed, because the debts and interest charged remain the same, while income falls with the lowering prices and shrinking market for farm products. The capitalist farmer may, if he wishes, avoid losses by simple curtailment of investment in current crop production. The small farmer, whose family living depends upon the market returning him his cost of production for his *entire* acreage and crop, finds this impossible. Restricted production, or what amounts to the same thing, restricted marketing, means to him a restricted living standard.

Marketing arrangements, therefore, in addition to financing, are of grave importance. And here, again, as with land itself, and with finance, the small farmer confronts an array of parasitical monopolies standing between him and the consuming market, limited by the reduced employment and *high prices maintained by monopoly on industrial products.*

Basically, there is no real solution for the problem of so-called "surpluses" of farm commodities, or of commodities in general, under capitalism. Only a socialist system, wherein the purchasing power of the people equals their producing power, can permanently guarantee a market. Nevertheless, insofar as mass purchasing power can be increased, or its decline halted, which is the general aim of the New Deal—the market for farm products, and with it the income of the farmers, will improve. Which is a vital reason why the small and middle farmers should support the New Deal measures aimed at increasing purchasing power, and all labor demands tending to the same end. It is also the

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logical basis upon which the farming population can be won for such specific proposals as "food for Spain and China"—in addition to the political reason to defend world democracy and oppose the Munich fascist conspiracy.

There is also the plan, which found wide favor among farmers when mentioned casually by Secretary Wallace, of the "two price" system for consumers, for it involves not only the government purchase of surpluses for relief and low income distribution and thus relieves the market glut and aids farm prices, but it would establish an excellent principle that people pay for food according to their income, rather than for what they get. Which is precisely why the Wall Street gentlemen so loudly protested Wallace's remark, and why he has become silent on the question. In general, the purchase by the government for relief distribution, and for shipment to democratic peoples besieged by fascism, of the huge farm surpluses, should dominate our propaganda, as against arguments in support of the "ever normal" granary idea, the benefits of which are limited by inherent features of capitalist production and moreover are based on the anti-social idea of restriction of production.

It is most necessary that the small California farmer, and others as well, be educated to the falsity of this illusion that restriction of either production or marketing is any solution for the "problem" of "surpluses." For here we find a carefully schemed plan by big growers to entrap the small producers into such rigged-up marketing restrictions as are bound sooner or later to freeze the small farmer out entirely and thus further monopolize the agricultural industry for the big capitalist growers. Such is the inevitable end of the California so-called "Pro-Rate Act" enacted into law in 1933 and amended in 1938.

The Pro-Rate Act carries out, with a great deal of windy pretense, exactly this policy. Its purpose is thus stated by the Act itself:

> "In the interests of the public welfare and general prosperity of the state, the unnecessary and unreasonable waste of agricultural wealth, hereinafter referred to as 'Agricultural Waste,' involved in the harvesting or preparation and delivery to market of agricultural commodities for which there exists only a limited consumer demand, should be eliminated, while at the same time preserving to all agricultural producers an equality of opportunity in the available market."

This statement is false in premise, in argument and conclusion. The law established a process injurious to the small farmer far worse than the restriction of the federal A.A.A.—but without the compensating benefits such as the A.A.A. offers. It was administered, *under the Merriam administration,* by a commision of nine big growers and processors, stooges of the banks and every one a big shot in the fascist Associated Farmers, all appointed by the governor, and its bureaucratic nature is topped off by provision for $500 fines for violation—if a farmer markets more than his quota. Yet the same Republican machine that put this over is loudest in its cries of "regimentation" and "dictatorship" against the New Deal farm measures, while the Associated Farmers rave against "interference with farmers marketing their produce"—by trade union organizations.

(To be concluded)

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PITFALLS OF PRAGMATIC LOGIC

BY PHILIP CARTER

JOHN DEWEY is probably the best known of American philosophers. His long career as a teacher, beginning at the University of Chicago in the frontier days and then at Columbia University in New York City until a few years ago, is remarkable not only for the thirty or so influential books he produced, but also for the direct influence he exerted upon thousands of students and teachers.

In the present book, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*,* Professor Dewey shows all his cumbersome, plodding, dogged, unbrilliant but provocative originality. The unphilosophical reader must be warned, of course, that it is one of the most cautious and unsensational books ever written. If he wants to find pragmatism stated in clear and unflinching terms, he must go back to James. If he wants to find operationalism defined in a bald uncompromising manner he must turn to Bridgman or to other writers. Professor Dewey's common sense is usually on guard to censor any extreme, clear-cut statement of either position which would be assailable by the customary arguments. This is because he is an erudite philosopher who knows the arguments of his adversaries and prepares for them in advance.

Yet the very title of the book shows the fighting edge of his polemic. *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry!* Logic is usually anything but that. Most books on the subject emanating from our universities emphasize the abstract, cut-and-dried formulae and neglect the living process of inquiry, experiment and discovery. The formulation of hypotheses indeed is often presented as a miracle or referred to genius, while little effort is made to exhibit the social and industrial conditions which motivate the advance of science. Formal logic, of course, has its value. It is important to know that if your argument takes the form: If all M is P and no S is M, then no S is P, you are always wrong, no matter what you are talking about; and it is something to know that if the form is different *in certain respects* your argument will always be valid. Even Hegel admitted the restricted value of formal logic. But this formal logic is nevertheless a poor substitute for a logic of inquiry, even if it is developed, as is the new symbolic logic, into a branch of (or the foundations of) mathematics.

Professor Dewey, though he betrays no great intimacy with the special technics of science, has written a logic of inquiry remarkably rich in suggestions. It has, however, many serious defects, all of which arise, it could be shown, from two theories which he rides throughout the book.

* John Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, Henry Holt, New York, $4.

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These are operationalism, pragmatism and the resulting subjectivism; and they are so intimately connected that it is almost impossible to disentangle them. To understand what this means, let us consider Dewey's use of the term "inquiry." Since he is writing a logic of inquiry it is natural that all the customary topics of formal logic, such as terms, judgments, propositions, arguments and knowledge should be treated in relation to inquiry. Dewey, however, goes much further. He reduces terms and propositions to mere fragments of the "continuity of inquiry" in which they occur, for it is this process of inquiry alone which gives them their significance (pp. 297, 311). This much might be admitted. Engels made the same point more clearly in his criticism of Duhring's truths-in-themselves. Isolated propositions are neither true nor false apart from the series and systems to which they belong. But when Dewey goes on to describe a universal proposition as a mere stage of inquiry (p. 191) or as a mere logical aid to the solution of problems (p. 310), and to deny that truth and falsity are properties of propositions, it is clear that he has pushed his theory to the brink of absurdity. From the fact that isolated propositions are not true and not false, it does not follow that truth and falsity are not properties of propositions. Propositions are not isolated. Dewey states his position thus:

". . . Propositions are to be differentiated and identified on the ground of the function of their contents as *means*, procedural and material, further distinction of forms of propositions being instituted on the ground of the special ways in which their respective characteristic subject-matters function as means. The latter point is the main theme of this chapter. But at this point it is pertinent to note that, since means as such are neither true nor false, truth-falsity is *not* a property of propositions. Means are either effective or ineffective; pertinent or irrelevant; wasteful or economical, the criterion for the difference being found in the consequences with which they are connected as means. On this basis special propositions are *valid* (strong, effective) or *invalid* (weak, inadequate); loose or rigorous, etc." (P. 287.)

This is pragmatism, pure and simple, or at least as pure and simple as pragmatism can be: propositions are mere means to an end, that is, to another proposition, and so on indefinitely. In the meantime truth, which Marxism has shown to be a reflection of reality, drops out of the picture. Inquiry appears to refer only to later stages of the same inquiry. Constantly feeding on its own terms and processes, it is like the snake which lived very well by continually swallowing itself. Truth as the correspondence of propositions with reality forever recedes before the advance of inquiry, as Dewey interprets it, without our ever having a taste of it. Truth is an ideal limit of an endless process of inquiry. It is a "concordance of an abstract statement with the ideal limit" (p. 345). Before this endless process is completed there is apparently no truth, but only propositions which are adequate, weak or irrelevant for the purpose of particular inquiries. The deficiency of such a view has been clearly shown by Marxism, which recognizes that truth, as a correspondence of knowledge with reality, is progressively attained through the dialectical-materialist advance of science.

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Not only are terms, propositions, arguments and truth interpreted as strands or phases of the process of inquiry. Objects, facts and qualities of things appear to exist only in so far as they have been confirmed in inquiry, and even then, perhaps, only as fragments of this process. Objects "are *means* of attaining knowledge of something else" (p. 119). "An object, logically speaking, is that set of connected distinctions or characteristics which emerges as a definite constituent of a resolved situation and is confirmed in the continuity of inquiry. This definition applies to objects as existential" (p. 520).

On the next page he speaks of realism (the view that objects can exist independent of consciousness and inquiry) as a partially fallacious theory. Objects, it appears, are tools of inquiry which we employ when they have been found useful. The fallacy of realism is to suppose that this taking and using of objects is a case of knowledge. But how, we may ask, could tools or objects be used in inquiry unless they were known to some extent? And, again, cannot objects exist which have never been "instituted" by inquiry?

Professor Dewey makes haste to reassure us. He believes that stones, stars, trees, cats and dogs exist independently of individual observers—but again, only "as sets of existential distinctions that have emerged and been tested over and over again. . . ."

Of course, we do not wish to say that Professor Dewey does not believe in the existence of unperceived objects, but only that he holds other views which are inconsistent with this belief. Under the sway of operationalism and pragmatism, even in the chastened form in which he accepts them, he totters continually on the brink of subjectivism, and if he does not quite take the leap, it is his common sense and not these theories which save him. Again and again we read statements such as the following: Judgment "is a continuous process of resolving an indeterminate unsettled situation into a determinately unified one, through operations which transform subject-matter originally given" (p. 283). And again, "inquiry effects existential transformation and construction of the material with which it deals" (p. 159). Now as long as Professor Dewey is talking of "judgment" and "inquiry" as experimentation, we can have no quarrel with him. Experiments do transform the subject-matter. A cat, for example, may lose a portion of its cerebellum in the course of an experiment, but even here it is important to note that the subject-matter must not be transformed except in one particular. If the cat loses too much blood, as well as its cerebellum, the experiment is a failure. But inquiry as such does not transform its subject-matter. If it did, it could never arrive at knowledge. In so far as inquiry involves physical manipulation of the subject-matter, the subject-matter is of course changed. But where such manipulation does not occur, as in historical studies, inquiry cannot in any sense be said to transform its subject-matter.

The whole matter is clarified if we read Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach."*

* See Appendix to *Ludwig Feuerbach*, by Frederick Engels, p. 73, International Publishers, New York.

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There Marx, in a compact aphoristic manner, states more clearly the dependence of theoretical knowledge upon the practical activity of men, including of course, economic and political activity, than Professor Dewey is able to do in his entire volume. Indeed, Professor Dewey has a positive genius for obscure and dubious formulation so that one is never sure whether his words or his thoughts have betrayed him. Even his students scattered throughout the country in colleges and schools seem to have caught more fire than light from him.

The principal objection to the term "inquiry," as to the other terms which Professor Dewey has given a highly eulogistic sense (such as "experience" and "intelligence"), is that it is, in any ordinary sense, subjective. The process of inquiry is a mental and behavior process of individual scientists. But it is also an inquiry *into* the nature of the objective world of cattle, stars, machines, Munich Pacts and Spanish embargoes. If these are mere fragments or incidents of the inquiring process, as Dewey seems to hold, what has become of the world toward which the inquiry was originally directed? At times it appears that the "continuity of inquiry" has swallowed the world. At times it is as if the world has evaporated entirely, nothing remaining but the inquiry into the nature of the world, just as the Cheshire cat disappeared in *Alice in Wonderland,* leaving only its grin behind.

It is operationalism and pragmatism which make all the trouble. Operationalism, in its extreme form, is the theory that the objects of sciences should be defined as the series of steps necessary to verify "their" existence. Thus, Halley's Comet is identified with the observations and calculations necessary to confirm its existence, and the only trouble with this procedure is that it reduces Halley's Comet and, indeed, the whole world, to the behavior of scientists. Dewey may perhaps not wish to accept such an extreme position. Starting out with the perfectly true observation that scientific laws are "functional" in the sense that "they are means of prediction," he jumps to the perfectly deplorable conclusion that they state only the conditions under which phenomena can be observed in the future. A prediction of an eclipse, he says, is an if-then proposition. "If certain operations are performed, then certain phenomena having determinate properties will be observed. Its hypothetical character shows that it is not final and complete but indeterminate and instrumental" (p. 456). This last sentence is true enough, in a certain sense. A prediction is instrumental, but why under the sun can't it be instrumental and yet describe with some degree of accuracy a future state of affairs as well? Moreover, the declaration that a prediction is an if-then proposition is a more serious mistake than readers unfamiliar with logic would be apt to think. If a prediction of an eclipse says *only* that if you look through the telescope at a certain time in the future, you will have certain sensations, then it says nothing at all about the future eclipse. Again, the real world of eclipses, stars, trees, class struggle, the socialist society, begins to recede, leaving behind only the grin of the cat and a disquieting sense

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that the principal matter has been omitted.

Operational *descriptions* are exceedingly important in science, but operational *definitions,* called for by operationalism, are unnecessary and very misleading. Let us *describe* the process by which an eclipse or a disease is verified, by all means. But what good purpose is served by *identifying* the eclipse or disease with these processes of verification by an arbitrary definition which lands us directly in subjectivism?

We Marxists recognize the importance of operations without being operationalists and we insist more than anyone else upon the importance of practice without in any sense being pragmatists. Marx in the "Theses on Feuerbach" criticized the old materialism for its stress upon contemplation (*Anschauung*) and its incomprehension of "revolutionary," "of practical-critical activity," and he charged that Feuerbach "does not conceive human activity itself as activity *through* objects." Lenin, similarly, recognized the decisive value of practical activity in the knowing process, but nevertheless rejected pragmatism in no uncertain terms. "Knowledge," he said, "may be biologically useful, useful in human practice, in the preservation of the species, but it is useful only when it reflects an objective truth independent of man." (*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* p. 111.) Later he comments upon a passage by the distinguished physicist, Helmholtz.

"Helmholtz says: In my opinion, therefore, there can be no possible sense in speaking of any other truth of our ideas except practical truth. Our ideas of things *cannot* be anything but symbols, natural signs for things which we learn how to use in order to regulate our movements and actions. Having learned correctly how to read those symbols, we are enabled to adjust our actions so as to bring about the desired results. . . ."

Lenin replies:

"This is not correct. Helmholtz is slipping toward subjectivism, towards a denial of objective reality and objective truth." (P. 196.)

This is Lenin's attitude toward the refined pragmatism and operationalism of Helmholtz. The rest of his book defines the chasm of difference which separates the dialectical materialism of the Marxists from the "infinite inventions of professorial scholasticism."

The attitude of Professor Dewey toward dialectics will naturally be of interest to the readers of *The Communist.* He is often regarded as a dialectician, but Marxists have rightly dissented. We find in his writings many passages affirming historical materialism, but no extended analysis of the actual impact of developing material forces upon developing social institutions and thought. Here, a reference to the influence of the stratified society of Greece upon its science and there, a word or two about the connection between capitalism and atomic individualism, but no consistent portrayal of the material forces in any one period, such as one would be led to expect from a historical materialist. More important than this: Dewey admits no general theory of development, but chooses methods eclectically here and there. The result

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is a perpetual tentativeness and experimentalism busied with scattered things; an attitude of being so intent on "listening to both sides," which is really an inability to grasp what is decisive, that often he hears only his wrong side; and, consequently, the rejection of the world view of Marxism, a complete inability to accept any positive program of decisive action, and a skepticism with regard to comprehensive social planning and construction, involving a determined class struggle, such as has taken place in the Soviet Union.

In the present volume there is a great deal of criticism of Aristotelian logic and some of it is very good. It is pointed, however, not in the direction of dialectic materialism, but rather to the advantage of empiricism and pragmatism. While Aristotelian logic is denied any application to the world, no other logic is put in its place, and we are left with the incredible conclusion that the world has no logic at all, and is simply a chaos. (*Chaos ist wiedergekommen!*) Logic is nothing but a tool of inquiry, a purely psychological and individual device to solve the problems of the scientist. It does not, according to Dewey, reflect the structure of the world any more than experimental apparatus does. Logic is simply a set of conventions adopted as a means of verifying this or that hypothesis. In the meantime the coherence and interdependence of scientific hypotheses is often lost to sight, and the probability which accrues to a theory due to its coordination with other scientific theories and laws is, in practice, much neglected. The trouble with this pragmatic interpretation of knowledge is that it is, at least in the long run, practically unworkable. Isolated hypotheses may be verified by the operational pragmatic method but not complete theories, or sciences, let alone science itself.

The shortcomings of Dewey's theory of inquiry leave a deep imprint on his social philosophy. His rejection of any unified effective large-scale plan for solving the dilemmas of capitalism and "the machine age" that he delineates at such length, is not surprising, and could have been predicted. His enthusiasm for James' "pluralism" led him to prefer discrete and disjointed solutions, and to regard anything else as dogmatism. His devotion to James' "open universe" prompted him to leave all the doors of the universe, or of human possibility, open, so that crackpots and even fascists and Trotskyites were allowed to enter to disrupt any unified plan for social progress.

A present-day liberal who brings unjust charges against the Soviet Union, and gives aid to its enemies, cannot continue in the character of a liberal. The man who in 1928 warmly praised the Soviet Union, ten years later joined the preposterous Trotsky "commission," a set of men who publicly advertised their frantic enmity to the Soviet Union, which they proposed to judge "impartially." By this act he has lost stature, not only in the eyes of American liberals and progressives, but in the opinion of many of his former admirers abroad. Unfortunately for him, and for his character as a great liberal, his philosophy could not safeguard him against the great blunder of his career. His pragmatism and pluralism did not permit

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him to see all the facts and values in relation. His lack of a historical theory of development and his reliance on disjointed narrow-practical methods left him no defense against the deceptive arguments of designing Trotskyites. But his failure to understand the Soviet treason trials is rooted demonstrably in the unscientific character of his philosophy. His rejection of objective truth, and his failure to recognize the dialectic coherence of evidence as a test of truth, left him with a distorted perspective. Professor Dewey is known as the philosopher of the practical, but his philosophy is so impractical that it cannot, by its very nature, accept the consequences of far-sighted, relentless struggle for democracy and socialism.

"The greatest contribution of all, which Marxist-Leninist theory has given to the masses, is *the Party*. The Communist Party is the organized theory, embodied in growing tens and hundreds of thousands of men and women, preserving and transmitting the experience and wisdom of past generations, enriching it by the experience of the present, transmitting it to the broadest masses, providing thereby the illumination, the guidance, the leadership, which will organize victory for the masses in their age-long struggle against the forces of darkness and reaction."—Earl Browder, *Theory As a Guide to Action*.

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CLASS CONFLICTS IN THE SOUTH—1850-1860

BY HERBERT BIEL

THE great attention given to the spectacular political struggles between the North and the South in the decade before the Civil War has tended to befog the equally important contests which went on during the same period within the South itself.

Writers have dealt at considerable length with the national scene, have demonstrated a growing conflict between an agrarian, slave-labor society and an increasingly industrial, free-labor society as to which should direct public opinion, enact and administer the laws, appropriate the West—in short, which should control the state. In 1860 the grip of the slave civilization upon the national government was very considerably loosened and clearly seemed destined to complete annihilation. The slavocracy therefore turned to bullets.

But there was more to it than that. The facts are that not only did the slavocrats see their external, or national, power seriously menaced by the Republican triumph of 1860, but they also observed their internal, local power greatly threatened by increasing restlessness among the exploited classes—the non-slaveholding whites and the slaves.

There were three general manifestations of this unrest: (1) slave disaffection, shown in individual acts of "insolence" or terrorism, and in concerted, planned efforts for liberation; (2) numerous instances of poor white implication in the slave conspiracies and revolts, showing a declining efficiency in the divide-and-rule policy of the Bourbons; (3) independent political action of the non-slaveholding whites aimed at the destruction of the slavocracy's control of the state governments. In the opinion of the writer this growing internal disaffection is a prime explanation for the desperation of the slaveholding class which drove it to the expedient of civil war.

WHY THE UNREST?

Factors tending to explain the slave unrest of the decade are soil exhaustion, leading to greater work demands, improved marketing facilities, having the same result, and economic depression from 1854-56 throughout the South, approaching, especially in 1855, the famine stage. These years witnessed, too, a considerable increase in industrialization and urbanization within the South. These phenomena[1]* were distinctly not conductive to the

* All references to sources, indicated by superior figures, will be found at the end of this article.—*The Editors.*

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creation of happy slaves. As a slaveholder remarked,[2] "The cities is no place for niggers. They get strange notions into their heads, and grow discontented. They ought, every one of them, to be sent back to the plantations." As a matter of fact there was for this reason, during this decade, an attempt to foster a "back-to-the-plantation" movement.

It is also true, as Olmsted observed,[3] that: "Any great event having the slightest bearing upon the question of emancipation is known to produce an unwholesome excitement" among the slaves. The decade is characterized by such events as the 1850 Compromise, the sensation caused by *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* the Kansas War, the 1856 election, the Dred Scott decision, Helper's *Impending Crisis,* Brown's raid, the election of 1860. If to this is added the political and social struggles within the South itself (to be described later), it becomes apparent that there were many occasions for "unwholesome excitement."

Combined with all this is a significant change in the Abolitionist movement. Originally this aimed at gradual emancipation induced by moral suasion. Then came the demand for immediate liberation, but still only via moral suasion. Then followed a split into those favoring political action and those opposed. Finally, and most noticeably in this decade, there arose a body of direct actionists whose idea was to "carry the war into Africa."

The shift is exemplified in the person of Henry C. Wright. In the 'forties he wrote the "Non-Resistant" column for Garrison's *Liberator,* by 1851 he felt it was the duty of abolitionists to go South and aid the slaves to flee, and by 1859 he was convinced[4] that it was "the right and duty of the slaves to resist their masters, and the right and duty of the North to incite them to resistance, and to aid them." By November, 1856, Frederick Douglass was certain that the "peaceful annihilation" of slavery was "almost hopeless" and therefore contended[5] "that the slave's right to revolt is perfect, and only wants the occurrence of favorable circumstances to become a duty. . . . We cannot but shudder as we call to mind the horrors that have marked servile insurrections—we would avert them if we could; but shall the millions for ever submit to robbery, to murder, to ignorance, and every unnamed evil which an irresponsible tyranny can devise, because the overthrow of that tyranny would be productive of horrors? We say not . . . terrible as it will be, we accept and hope for it."

And while John Brown's work was the most spectacular, he was by no means the only Northern man to agitate among the slaves themselves; there were others, the vast majority unnamed, but some are known, like Alexander Ross, James Redpath, and W. L. Chaplin.[6] But this exceedingly dangerous work was mainly done by Northern or Canadian Negroes who had themselves escaped from slavery. A few of these courageous people are known—Harriet Tubman, Josiah Henson, William Still, Elijah Anderson, John Mason. It has been estimated[7] that, from Canada alone, in 1860, 500 Negroes went into the South to rescue their brothers. What people can offer a more splendid chapter to the record of human fortitude?

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The obvious is at times elusive and it is therefore necessary to bear in mind when trying to discover the causes of slave disaffection that one is indeed dealing with *slaves*. We will give but one piece of evidence to indicate something of what this meant. In January, 1854, the British consul at Charleston, in a private letter, wrote,[8] "The frightful atrocities of slave holding must be seen to be described. . . . My next-door neighbor, a lawyer of the first distinction, and a member of the *Southern Aristocracy*, told me himself that he flogged all his own negroes, men and women, when they misbehaved. . . . It is literally no more to kill a slave than to shoot a dog."

TERRORISM AND INSUBORDINATION

There is considerable evidence pointing to a quite general state of insubordination and disaffection, apart from conspiracies and revolts, among the slave population.

A lady of Burke County, North Carolina, complained in April, 1850, of such a condition among her slaves and declared, "I have not a single servant (slave) at my command." Three years later a traveler in the South observed "in the newspapers, complaints of growing insolence and insubordination among the negroes."[9] References to the "common practice with slaves" of harboring runaways recur, as do items of the arrest of slaves caught in the act of learning to read. A paper of 1858 reported the arrest of ninety Negroes for that "crime." It urged severe punishment and remarked, "Scarcely a week passes, that instruments of writing, prepared by negroes, are not taken from servants (slaves) in the streets, by the police."[10]

A Louisiana paper of 1858 reported "more cases of insubordination among the negro population . . . than ever known before," and a Missouri paper of 1859 commented upon the "alarmingly frequent" cases of slaves killing their owners. It added that "retribution seems to be dealt out to the perpetrators with dispatch and in the form to which only a people wrought up to the highest degree of indignation and excitement would resort."[11]

Examples of such retribution with their justification are enlightening. Olmsted tells of the burning of a slave near Knoxville, Tenn., for the offense of killing his master and quotes the editor of a "liberal" newspaper as justifying the lynching as a "means of absolute, necessary self-defense." The same community shortly found six legal executions needed for the stability of its society.[12] Similarly, a slave in August, 1854, killed his master in Mt. Meigs, Alabama, and, according to the Vigilance Committee, boasted of his deed. This slave, too, was burned alive. "The gentlemen constituting the meeting were men of prudence, deliberation and intelligence, and acted from an imperative sense of the necessity of an example to check the growing and dangerous insubordination of the slave population." Precisely the same things happened[13] in the same region in June, 1856, and January, 1857. Again, in August, 1855, a patrolman in Louisiana killed a slave who did not stop when hailed and this was considered[14] proper since "Recent disorders among the slaves in New Iberia

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had made it a matter of importance that the laws relative to the police of slaves, should be strictly enforced."

A common method by which American slaves showed their "docility" was arson. This occurred with striking frequency during the ten years under scrutiny. For example, from Nov. 26, 1850, to Jan. 15, 1851, one New Orleans paper reported slave burnings of at least seven sugar houses. For a similar period, Jan. 31, 1850, to May 30, 1851, there were seven *convictions* of slaves in Virginia for arson.[15]

Burnings were at times concerted. Thus the Norfolk *Beacon* of Sept. 21, 1852, declared that the slaves of Princess Anne County, Va., had excited alarm and that an extra patrol had been ordered out. And,

> "On Sunday night last, this patrol made a descent upon a church where a large number of negroes had congregated for the purpose of holding a meeting, and dispersed them. In a short time, the fodder stacks of one of the party who lived near were discovered on fire. The patrol immediately started for the fire, but before reaching the scene it was discovered that the stacks of other neighbors had shared a like fate, all having no doubt been fired by the negroes for revenge. A strict watch is now kept over them, and most rigid means adopted to make every one know and keep his place."

The *Federal Union* of Milledgeville, Ga., of March 20, 1855, told of incendiary fires set by slaves that month in South Carolina and three counties of Georgia. Property damage was considerable and "many persons were seriously injured."[16]

The fleeing of slaves reached very great proportions from 1850 to 1860 and was a constant and considerable source of annoyance to the slavocracy. According to the census estimates 1,011 slaves *succeeded* in escaping in 1850 and 803 *succeeded* in 1860. At current prices that represented a loss of about $1,000,000 each year. But that is a very small part of the story. First, the census reports were poor. The census takers were paid a certain sum for each entrant and so tended to make only those calls that were least expensive to themselves. City figures were therefore more reliable than those for rural communities. Moreover, Olmsted found census taking in the South "more than ordinarily unreliable" and told of a census taker there who announced that he would be at a certain tavern at a certain dav "for the purpose of receiving from the people of the vicinity—who were requested to call upon him—the information it was his duty to obtain!"[17]

According to Professor W. B. Hesseltine, "Between 1830 and 1860 as many as 2,000 slaves a year passed into the land of the free along the routes of the Underground Railroad," and Professor Siebert has declared[18] that this railroad saw its greatest activity from 1850 to 1860. And this is but a fraction of those who fled but did not succeed in reaching a free land, were captured or forced to turn back. When people pay as high as $300 for one bloodhound[19] the fleeing of slaves is a serious problem indeed.

It is also to be noted that the decade witnessed a qualitative as well as quantitative change in the fugitive slave problem, for now not only did more slaves flee, but more often than before they fled in groups; they, as Southern papers put it, stampeded.[20]

Another piece of evidence of the growing unrest of the slave population is afforded by the figures for money

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appropriated by the state of Virginia for slaves owned by her citizens who were *legally* executed or banished from the state.[21] For the fiscal year 1851-52 the sum equalled $12,000; for 1852-53 the sum was $15,000; 1853-54, $19,000 was appropriated and the same for 1854-55. For the year 1855-56, $22,000 was necessary and this was duplicated the next year. For 1857-58 the sum was $35,000 and stayed at that same high level for 1858-59. For each of the next two years prior to the Civil War, 1859-60, 1860-61, $30,000 was appropriated. Thus "bad" slaves, legally dispossed of, cost the one state of Virginia in ten years the very tidy sum of $239,000.

REBELLION

There was still another manifestation of slave disaffection: conspiracy or revolt. Some of the episodes already described, as that in Virginia in 1852 or in Georgia in 1855, may perhaps be thought of as conspiracies. The decade witnessed many more, the most important of which follow.

A free Negro, George Wright, of New Orleans, was asked by a slave, Albert, in June, 1853, to join in a revolt.[22] He declared his interest and was brought to a white man, a teacher by the name of Dyson, who had come to Louisiana in 1840 from Jamaica. Dyson trusted Wright, declared that one hundred whites had agreed to aid the Negroes in their bid for freedom, and urged Wright to join. Wright did—verbally. He almost immediately betrayed the plot and led the police to the slave Albert. The slave at the time of arrest, June 13, carried a knife, a sword, a revolver, one bag of bullets, one pound of powder, two boxes of percussion caps, and $86. The patrol was ordered out, the city guard strengthened, and twenty slaves and Dyson were instantly arrested.

Albert stated that 2,500 slaves were involved. He named none. In prison he declared that "all his friends had gone down the coast and were fighting like soldiers. If he had shed blood in the cause he would not have minded the arrest." It was indeed reported that "a large number of negroes have fled from their masters and are now missing," but no actual fighting was mentioned. Excitement was great along the coast, however, and the arrest of one white man, a cattle driver, occurred at Bonnet Clare. A fisherman, Michael McGill, testified that he had taken Dyson and two slaves carrying what he thought were arms to a swamp from which several Negroes emerged. The Negroes were given the arms and disappeared.

The New Orleans papers tended to minimize the trouble, but did declare that the city contained "malicious and fanatical" whites, "cutthroats in the name of liberty—murderers in the guise of philanthropy" and commended the swift action of the police, while calling for further precautions and restrictions. The last piece of information concerning this is an item telling of an attack by Albert upon the jailer in which he caused "the blood to flow." The disposition of the rebels is not reported.

The year 1856 was one of extraordinary slave unrest. The first serious difficulty of the year was caused by maroons in North Carolina. A letter[23] of Aug. 25, 1856, to Governor Thomas Bragg signed by Richard A. Lewis

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and twenty-one others informed him of a "very secure retreat for runaway negroes" in a large swamp between Bladen and Robeson Counties. There "for many years past, and at this time, there are several runaways of bad and daring character—destructive to all kinds of Stock and dangerous to all persons living by or near said swamp." Slaveholders attacked these maroons August 1, but accomplished nothing and saw one of their own number killed. "The negroes ran off cursing and swearing and telling them to come on, they were ready for them again." The Wilmington *Journal* of August 14 mentioned that these Negroes "had cleared a place for a garden, had cows, etc., in the swamp." Mr. Lewis and his friends were "unable to offer sufficient inducement for negro hunters to come with their dogs unless aided from other sources." The Governor suggested that magistrates call for the militia, but whether this was done or not is unknown.

A plot involving over 200 slaves and supposed to mature on Sept. 6,, 1856, was discovered[24] in Colorado County, Texas, shortly before that date. Many of the Mexican inhabitants of the region were declared to be implicated. And it was felt "that the lower class of the Mexican population are incendiaries in any country where slaves are held." They were arrested and ordered to leave the county within five days and never to return "under the penalty of death." A white person by the name of William Mehrmann was similarly dealt with. Arms were discovered in the possession of a few slaves. Every one of the two hundred arrested was severely whipped, two dying under the lash. Three were hanged. One slave leader, Frank, was not captured.

Trouble involving some 300 slaves and a few white men, one of whom was named James Hancock, was reported in October from two counties, Ouchita and Union, in Arkansas, and two parishes, Union and Claiborne, across the border in Louisiana. The outcome here is not known. On November 7 "an extensive scheme of negro insurrection" was discovered in Lavaca, De Witt and Victoria Counties in the Southeastern part of Texas and very near Colorado County, seat of the October conspiracy. A letter from Victoria of November 7 declared that: "The negroes had killed off all the dogs in the neighborhood, and were preparing for a general attack" when betrayal came. Whites were implicated, one being "severely horsewhipped," and the others driven out of the country. What became of the slaves is not stated.[25]

One week later a conspiracy was disclosed in St. Mary parish, Louisiana, It was believed[26] that "favorite family servants" were the leaders. Slaves throughout the parish were arrested. Three white men and one free Negro were also held. The slaves were lashed and returned to their masters, but the four others were imprisoned. The local paper of November 22 declared that the free Negro "and at least one of the white men, will suffer death for the part taken in the matter."

And in the very beginning of November trouble was reported[27] from Tennessee. A letter of November 2 told of the arrest of thirty slaves, and a white man named Williams, in Fayette County, at the Southwestern tip

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of the state. It was believed that the plot extended to "the surrounding counties and states." Confirmation of this soon came. Within two weeks unrest was reported from Montgomery County in the north central part of the state, and across the border in the iron foundries of Louisa, Kentucky. Again many slaves and one white man were arrested. Shortly thereafter plots were discovered in Obion, at Tennessee's western tip, and in Fulton, Kentucky, as well as in New Madrid and Scott Counties, Missouri.

In December plots were reported, occasionally outbreaks occurred, slaves and whites were arrested, tortured, banished and executed in virtually every slave state. The discontent forced its way through notwithstanding clear evidences of censorship. Thus a Georgia paper confessed[28] that slave disaffection was a "delicate subject to touch" and that it had "refrained from giving our readers any of the accounts of contemplated insurrections."

The Washington correspondent of the New York *Weekly Tribune* declared on December 20 that: "The insurrectionary movement in Tennessee obtained more headway than is known to the public—important facts being suppressed in order to check the spread of the contagion and prevent the true condition of affairs from being understood elsewhere." Next week the same correspondent stated that he had "reliable information" of serious trouble in New Orleans leading to the hanging of twenty slaves, "but the newspapers carefully refrain from any mention of the facts."

Indeed, the New Orleans *Daily Picayune* of December 9 had itself admitted that it had "refrained from publishing a great deal which we receive by the mails, going to show that there is a spirit of turbulence abroad in various quarters." December 23 it said the same thing about "this very delicate subject" but did state that there were plots for rebellion during the Christmas holidays "in Kentucky, Arkansas and Tennessee, as well as in Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas" and that recent events "along the Cumberland river in Kentucky and Tennessee and the more recent affairs in Mississippi, approach very nearly to positive insurrection."

To this may be added Maryland, Alabama, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.[29] Features of the conspiracies are worth particular notice. Arms were discovered among the slaves in, at least, Tennessee, Kentucky and Texas. Preparations for blowing up bridges were uncovered. Attacks upon iron mills in Kentucky were started but defeated. At least three whites were killed by slaves in that same state. The date for the execution of four slaves in Dover, Tennessee, was pushed ahead for fear of an attempt at rescue, and a body of 150 men was required to break up a group of about the same number of slaves marching to Dover for that very purpose.

Free Negroes were directly implicated as well as slaves in Kentucky, and they were driven out of several cities as Murfreesboro, Tenn., Paducah, Ky., and Montgomery, Ala. Whites, too, were often implicated. Two were forced to flee from Charles County, Maryland. One, named Tay-

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lor, was hanged in Dover, Tenn., and two others driven out. One was hanged and another whipped in Cadiz, Ky. One was arrested in Obion, Tenn. The Galveston, Texas, *News* of December 27 reported the frustration of a plot in Houston County and stated, "Arms and ammunition were discovered in several portions of the county, given to them, no doubt, by white men, who are now living among us, and who are constantly inciting our slaves to deeds of violence and bloodshed."

A letter, passed along by whites as well as slaves, found Dec. 24, 1856, on a slave employed on the Richmond and York Railroad in Virginia is interesting from the standpoint of white cooperation and indicates, too, a desire for something more than bare bodily freedom. The letter reads:[30]

"My dear friend: You must certainly remember what I have told you—you must come up to the contract—as we have carried things thus far. Meet at the place where we said, and dont make any disturbance until we meet and d'ont let any white man know any-thing about it, unless he is truth-worthy. The articles are all right and the country is ours certain. Bring all your friends; tell them, that if they want freedom, to come. D'ont let it leak out; if you should get in any difficulty send me word immediately to afford protection. Meet at the crossing and prepare for Sunday night for the neighbourhood—

"P.S. Dont let anybody see this—

Freedom—Freeland
Your old friend
W.B."

Another interesting feature of the plots of November and December, 1856, is the evidence of the effect of the bitter Presidential contest of that year between the Republican, Frémont, and the Democrat, Buchanan. The slaves were certain that the Republican Party stood for their liberation and some felt that Colonel Frémont would aid them, forcibly, in their efforts for freedom. "Certain slaves are so greatly imbued with this fable that I have seen them smile when they were being whipped, and have heard them say that, 'Frémont and his men can hear the blows they receive.'" One unnamed martyr, a slave iron worker in Tennessee, "said that he knew all about the plot, but would die before he would tell. He therefore received 750 lashes, from which he died."[31]

Of the John Brown raid nothing may be said that has not already been told, except that to draw the lesson from the attempt's failure that the slaves were docile, as has so often been done, is absurd. And it would be absurd even if we did not have a record of the bitter struggle of the Negro people against slavery. This is so for two main reasons: first, Brown's raid was made in the northwestern part of Virginia, where slavery was of a domestic, household nature and where slaves were relatively few; secondly, Brown gave the slaves absolutely no foreknowledge of his attempt. The slaves had no way of judging Brown's chances or even his sincerity, and, in that connection, let it be remembered that slave stealing was a common crime in the Old South.

The event aroused tremendous excitement. The immediate result is well described in this paragraph:

"A most terrible panic, in the meantime, seizes not only the village, the vicinity, and all parts of the state, but every slave state in the Union. . . . Rumours of insurrections, apprehensions of invasions, whether well-founded or ill-founded, alters not the proof of the inherent and incurable weakness and

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insecurity of society, organized upon a slave-holding basis." [32]

Many of these rumors were undoubtedly false or exaggerated both by terror and by anti-"Black Republican" politicians. Bearing this in mind, however, there yet remains good evidence of real and widespread disaffection among the slaves.

Late in November, 1859, there were several incendiary fires in the neighborhood of Berryville, Virginia. Two slaves, Jerry and Joe, of Col, Francis McCormick were arrested on the charge of conspiracy and convicted. An effort was made to save these slaves from hanging for it was felt that the evidence against them was not conclusive and that since "We of the South, have boasted that our slaves took no part in the raid upon Virginia, and did not sympathize with Brown,"[33] it would look bad to hang two slaves now for the same crime. Others, however, urged their executions as justified on the evidence and necessary as an example, for "there are other negroes who disserve just as much punishment." The slaves' sentences were commutted to imprisonment, at hard labor, for life.

In December Negroes in Bolivar, Missouri, revolted and attacked their enslavers with sticks and stones. A few whites were injured and at least one slave was killed. Later,[34]

"A mounted company was ranging the woods in search of negroes. The owner of some rebellious slaves was badly wounded, and only saved himself by flight. Several blacks have been severely punished. The greatest excitement prevailed, and every man was armed and prepared for a more serious attack."

Still later advices declared that "the excitement had somewhat subsided."

Early in July, 1860, fires swept over and devastated many cities in Northern Texas. Slaves were suspected and arrested.[35] White men were invariably reported as being implicated, and frequent notices of their beatings and executions together with slaves occur. Listing of the counties in which plots were reported, cities burned, and rebels executed will give one an idea of the extensiveness of the trouble and help explain the abject terror it aroused: Anderson, Austin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Grimes, Hempstead, Lamar, Milam, Montgomery, Rusk, Tarrant, Walker and Wood. The reign of terror lasted for about eight weeks.

And before it was over reports of disaffection came from other areas. In August a conspiracy among the slaves, again with white accomplices, said to have been inspired by a nearby maroon band, was uncovered and crushed in Talladega County, Ala.[36] About 100 miles south of this, in Pine Level, Montgomery County, of the same state, in that same month, the arrest of a white man, a harness maker, was reported[37] for "holding improper conversations with slaves." Within five months serious difficulty is reported from that region.

Meanwhile, still in August, plots were uncovered in Whitfield, Cobb, and Floyd Counties in Northwest Georgia. Said the Columbus, Ga., *Sun*, of Aug. 29: "By a private letter from Upper Georgia, we learnt that an insurrectionary plot has been discovered among the negroes in the vicinity of Dalton and Marietta and great excitement was occasioned by it, and still prevails." The slaves had in-

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tended to burn Dalton, capture a train and crash on into Marietta some seventy miles away. Thirty-six of the slave leaders were imprisoned and the entire area took on a warlike aspect. Again it was felt that "white men instigated the plot," but, since Negro testimony was not acceptable against a white man, the evidence against them was felt to be insufficient for conviction. Another Georgia paper of the same month, the Augusta *Dispatch,* admitting: "We dislike to allude to the evidences of the insurrectionary tendency of things . . ." nevertheless did deign barely to mention the recent discovery of a plot among the slaves of Floyd County, about forty miles northwest of Marietta.

In September a slave girl betrayed a conspiracy in Winston County, Mississippi. Approximately thirty-five slaves were arrested and yet again it was discovered that whites were involved.[38] At least one slave was hanged as well as one white man described as a photographer named G. Harrington.

Late in October a plot first formed in July was disclosed among the slaves of Norfolk and Princess Anne Counties, Virginia, and Currituck County, North Carolina.[39] Jack and Denson, slaves of a Mr. David Corprew of Princess Anne, were among the leaders. Other were named Leicester, Daniel, Andrew, Jonas and William. These men planned to start the fight for freedom with their spades and axes and grubbing hoes. And it was understood, according to a slave witness, that "white folks were to come in there to help us," but in no way could the slaves be influenced to name their white allies. Banishment, that is, sale and transportation out of the state, was the leaders' punishment.

In November plots were disclosed in Crawford and Habersham Counties, Georgia.[40] In both places whites were involved. In Crawford a white man, described as a Northern tinsmith, was executed, while a white implicated in Habersham was given five hours to leave. How many slaves were involved is not clear. No executions among them were reported. According to the Southern papers the rebels were merely "severely whipped."

December finds the trouble back again in the heart of Alabama, in Pine Level, Autaugaville, Prattville and Hayneville. A resident of the region declared it involved[41] "many hundred negroes" and that "the instigators of the insurrection were found to be the low-down, or poor, whites of the country." It was discovered that the plot called for the redistribution of the "land, mules, and money." Said another source, the Montgomery, Ala., *Advertiser* of Dec. 13:

> "We have found out a deep laid plan among the negroes of our neighborhood, and from what we can find out from our negroes, it is general all over the country. . . . We hear some startling facts. They have gone far enough in the plot to divide our estates, mules, lands, and household furniture."

The crop of martyrs in this particular plot numbered at least twenty-five Negroes and four whites. The names of but two of the whites are known, Rollo and Williamson.

There is evidence[42] of the existence in December, 1860, of a widespread secret organization of slaves in South Carolina, dedicated to the objective of freedom. Said J. R. Gilmore, a visitor in the region:

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". . . there exists among the blacks a secret and wide-spread organization of a Masonic character, having its grip, password, and oath. It has various grades of leaders, who are competent and *earnest* men and its ultimate object is FREEDOM."

Gilmore warned a slave leader, Scipio, that such an organization meant mischief. No, said Scipio, "it meant only RIGHT and JUSTICE."

The slaves saw the impending war between the states and sang:

"And when dat day am come to pass
We'll all be dar to see!
So shut your mouf as close as death,
And all you niggas hole your breafh,
And do de white folks brown!"

Or, in more sober prose, Scipio told Mr. Gilmore that the South would be defeated " 'cause you see dey'll fight wid only one hand. When dey fight de Norf wid de right hand, dey'll hev to hold de nigga wid de leff." Scipio's parting words were a plea that Gilmore let the North know that the slaves were panting for freedom and that the poor whites, too, were victims of the same vicious system.

(To be concluded.)

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20 Richmond *Daily Dispatch,* Sept. 17, 1856; *Annual Report of American Anti-Slavery Society . . . for year ending May 1, 1859,* N. Y. 1860, p. 84.

21 Citation in detail for these figures would require too much space. They are taken from the *Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia* for each of the years mentioned.

22 The sources used for this are the New Orleans *Daily Picayune,* June 14, 15, 16, 23, 1853; *The Liberator,* June 24, July 1, 8, 1853, citing other Southern newspapers.

23 *Governor's Letter Book* (MS.), No. 43, pp. 514-15, Historical Commission, Raleigh, N. C.

24 Austin *State Gazette,* Sept. 27, 1856; F.

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Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas,* N. Y., 1860, pp. 503-504, quoting other Texan papers.

25 *N. Y. Weekly Tribune,* Nov. 15, 1856, citing Ouchita, La., *Register;* Austin *State Gazette,* Nov. 15, 1856; New Orleans *Daily Picayune,* Nov. 16, 1856.

26 New Orleans *Daily Picayune,* Nov. 27, Dec. 2, 1856.

27 *Liberator,* Nov. 28, Dec. 12, 1856, citing local papers.

28 Milledgeville *Federal Union* quoted in U. Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier,* II, p. 116.

29 Support for this and the following paragraph will be found in *Letter Books* of the Governors of North Carolina (MS.) T. Bragg, No. 43, pp. 635, 636, 639, 653, 654, located in Raleigh; New Orleans *Daily Picayune,* Dec. 12, 13, 23, 24, 25, 26, 1856; Richmond *Daily Dispatch,* Dec. 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 1856; N. Y. *Weekly Tribune,* Dec. 13, 20, 1856, Jan. 3, 1857; *Liberator,* Dec. 12, 1856; *Ann. Rept. Amer. Anti-Slavery Society* 1857-58, pp. 76-77; J. Stirling, *op. cit.,* pp. 51, 59, 91, 294, 297-98; Olmsted, *Back Country,* pp. 474-75; *Journal of Southern History,* I, pp. 43-44. An escaped German revolutionist, Adolph Douai, published an Abolitionist paper in San Antonio, Texas, from 1852 until 1855, when he was driven out. See M. Hillquit, *History of Socialism in U. S.,* N. Y., 1910, p. 171.

30 Copied by Richard H. Coleman in a letter, asking for arms, dated Caroline county, Dec. 25, 1856, to Governor Henry Wise, in *Executive Papers,* archives division, State Library, Richmond. Other letters in this source show that the Governor in Dec., 1856, received requests from and sent arms to fifteen counties.

31 Letter from Montgomery County, Tenn., originally in *The New York Times,* in *Liberator,* Dec. 19, 1856; see also N. Y. *Weekly Tribune,* Dec. 20, 27, 1856, quoting local papers, and *Atlantic Monthly* (1858), II, pp. 732-33.

32 *Principia,* N. Y., Dec. 17, 1859.

33 Letters quoted are to Governor Letcher from P. Williams, Jan. 5, 1860, and C. C. Larue, Jan. 17, 1860, in *Executive Papers,* State Library, Richmond.

34 *Principia,* N. Y., Jan. 7, 1860, quoting Missouri *Democrat.* Karl Marx read reports of this revolt. See his comment and Engels' reply in *The Civil War in the United States,* N. Y., 1937, p. 221.

35 Austin *State Gazette,* July 14, 28, Aug. 4, 11, 18, 25, 1860; John Townsend, *The Doom of Slavery,* Charleston, 1860, pp. 34-38.

36 *Journal of Southern History,* I, p. 47.

37 *Liberator,* Aug. 24, 1860.

38 St. Louis *Evening News* quoted in *Liberator,* Oct. 26, 1860.

39 Material on this is in *Executive Papers,* Nov., 1860, State Library, Richmond.

40 R. B. Flanders, *Plantation Slavery in Georgia,* Chapel Hill, 1933, p. 275.

41 N. Y. *Daily Tribune,* Jan. 3, May 29, Aug. 5, 1861.

42 Edmund Kirke (J. R. Gilmore), *Among the Pines,* N. Y., 1862, pp. 20, 25, 59, 89, 90-91, 301.

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NOTES ON TWO ECONOMIC CYCLES

BY GEORGE WALLACE

THE table on pages 184-85 shows the cyclical changes since 1929 as indicated by the leading economic indexes. It is prepared in such a way as to show by the use of indexes and their corresponding dates what happened during the last two crises—of 1929 and 1937. High and low points in these two cycles are given in the table, together with their corresponding dates. Thus we can see both the duration and the extent of rise and decline in the two crises.

Although there are many columns in the table, their significance becomes easily apparent if we follow through the various columns in order. The first index appearing in the table is that of business activity prepared by the weekly financial paper, *The Annalist*. The first two columns show that this index reached its peak before the 1929 crash in June of that year. It stood then at 117.2.

Taken alone, this information has limited value, except as it indicates the moment when the crisis was about to send production, employment, sales, stocks, in fact all economic activities, crashing down. It acquires an added meaning, however, when considered in relation to the base or unit in which the index is expressed. *The Annalist* assumes as the base—"normal = 100." There are many indexes of business activity in existence—*The New York Times, Business Week,* Cleveland Trust Company and many others. All of them are based on a combination of varying economic series, considered of equal or greater importance, and thus are intended to reflect the economic situation as a whole rather than in any limited field such as auto or steel production, car loadings or payrolls.

Instead of relating these business activity indexes to some base year, many bourgeois statisticians use the misleading concept of a "normal" state. We know that this is misleading because it presupposes that there is some (usually mathematically constructed) trend which is independent of any other change, be it cyclical, seasonal, or "random," such as war, famine, flood, etc. For the purpose of our table, it is important to note what base is used in the given index. For instance, most of the production indexes in this table are based on a 1923-25 average as equal to 100. This period is used as a base by the Federal Reserve Board in constructing its various series.

Thus, when we note the current industrial production index and find it to be 104, we must not forget that this figure is expressed in terms of the 1923-25 average, that is, in terms of conditions existing 14 to 15 years ago. Our population since then has grown

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by many millions, or by about 17 per cent.

"Thus on a per capita basis," as pointed out in Labor Research Association's *Economic Notes*, December, 1938, "the level of production is much lower than fifteen years ago. Certainly any 'normal' of production should take into consideration the growth of population and the increasing output therefore required to maintain even the low standard of living of the early 'twenties."

While the first two columns give the high point and the date for the period immediately preceding the 1929 crisis, the following two columns give the lowest point of that crisis period. *The Annalist* index, for example, went down from 117.2 to 62.5 in March, 1933—a drop of 47 per cent!

The columns following show the high point, in 1937, in the ensuing recovery, and the low point in the new crisis, with their corresponding dates. Thus, *The Annalist* index went up to 111.0 in August, 1937, still below the 117.2 high point of the preceding cycle. The column, "% of 1929 high" shows it clearly. It tells us that the high point before the 1937 crisis was 95 per cent of the 1929 peak, that is, 5 per cent below that peak.

The improvement in economic conditions continued from 1933 on through the middle of 1937. However, the peak of 1937, as the percentage column of the 1937 high indicates, did not reach the peak of 1929. This is clearly shown by those series which reflect the general economic situation. Thus, the indexes of business activity, total industrial production, and manufacturing production, were, respectively, 95, 97 and 98 per cent of the 1929 high. This is a manifestation of the declining phase of capitalist economy in the condition of the general crisis of capitalism. Instead of the new cycle rising to a higher level than the preceding one, it takes place on a lower level than before.

Significant is the fact that the improvement which came to an end in 1937 was not even from one series to another. Very few of the series in our table rose above 1929. This was the case with boot and shoe production and cotton consumption; but they reflect elementary consumption needs of the population and therefore might be expected to regain their losses more quickly. If we had an index for bread consumption, it would probably remain fairly stable and not be severely affected by a crisis. For a worker, in cutting down on his expenditures, will economize first on articles less essential than bread.

Of the leading production indexes, iron and steel is the only series which surpassed the 1929 peak—and this only by less than 1 per cent. In the machine tools series we find a considerable rise. But the machine tool industry—a very small factor in total industrial production—is very sensitive to any changes in production technique, and in the 1933-37 recovery period it responded quickly to employers' demands for greater rationalization of plant in order to cut labor costs, as well as to the rising foreign orders for armament tools. The most weighty series, such as total industrial production, manufacturing production, employment and payrolls in manufacturing industries, were lower than, although close to, the 1929 high, while a number of indexes were far

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		CRISIS OF 1929				— CRISIS OF 1937 —						LATEST MONTH AVAILABLE**		
		High point		Low point		High point		% of 1929 high	Low point		% of 1937 high			
	Base or units	Month	Data	Month	Data	Month	Data		Month	Data		Month	Data	% of 1937 high
Annalist index of business activity	Normal=100	6/29	117.2	3/33	62.5	8/37	111.0	95	5/38	73.8	66	11/38	95.0	86
Total industrial production	1923-25=100	5/29	126	7/32	56	5/37	122	97	6/38	77	63	11/38	104	85
Manufacturing production	1923-25=100	5/29	128	7/32	55	4/37	125	98	6/38	75	60	11/38	103	82
Mineral production	1923-25=100	10/29	127	6/32	62	10/37	125	98	5/38	90	72	11/38	105	84
Auto production	1923-25=100	4/29	184	10/32	15	5/37	163	89	9/38	26	16	11/38	115	71
Boot and shoe production	1923-25=100	9/29	126	12/30	63	3/37	157	125	12/37	74	47	11/38	110	71
Iron and steel production	1923-25=100	6/29	145	8/32	23	5/37	146	101	12/37	43	29	11/38	101	69
Steel ingot production (% of capacity)	percent	6/29	100	3/33	15	5/37	90	90	12/37	26	29	11/38	61	68
Machine tools, new orders	1926=100	2/29	186	3/33	7	4/37	282	152	5/38	67	24	11/38	112	40
Cotton consumption	(thousands of bales)	5/29	669	7/32	279	3/37	777	116	4/38	413	53	11/38	596	77

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Construction (value of contracts awarded)	millions	5/28	667	2/33	53	7/37	322	48	2/38	119	37	11/38	302	94
Freight car loadings	1923-25=100	9/29	123	3/33	48	9/37	87	71	4/38	55	63	11/38	70	80
Unemployment (A. F. of L.)*	millions	9/29	.6	3/33	15.6	9/37	7.5	1248	6/38	11.4	152	11/38	10.4	139
Employment — manufactures	1923-25=100	9/29	110	7/32	61	8/37	109	99	6/38	82	75	11/38	91	83
Payrolls—manufactures	1923-25=100	9/29	114	3/33	38	5/37	110	96	7/38	71	64	11/38	84	76
Cost of living	1923=100	10/29	101	4/33	72	9/37	89	88	8/38	86	96	11/38	86	97
Wholesale prices	1926=100	10/28	99	2/33	60	4/37	88	89	8/38	78	89	11/38	78	89
Department store sales	1923-25=100	12/28	192	7/32	46	12/36	161	84	7/38	58	36	11/38	99	61
Exports (value, U.S. merchandise)	1923-25=100	10/28	145	3/33	29	10/37	89	61	7/38	60	67	11/38	67	75
Imports (value, for consumption)	1923-25=100	4/29	127	3/33	28	3/37	93	73	7/38	46	50	11/38	54	59
Share prices (Dow-Jones indust. average)	$ per share	9/29	365	7/32	46	3/37	188	52	4/38	113	60	11/38	152	81

* Figures used merely to show trend in unemployment. The A. F. of L. figures are considered to underestimate total unemployment in the opinion of Labor Research Association. Such series as unemployment are frequently referred to as "inverted series." They go up when others decline; their "high" points are really their low points and vice versa.

** Preliminary.

Source: *Survey of Current Business,* Federal Reserve Board *Bulletin, The Annalist* and the *American Federationist.*

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below. Among the latter were such important series as construction, freight car loadings, foreign trade, security stocks. Furthermore, unemployment was twelve times as large as in 1929 and department store sales, reflecting the public's purchasing power, were 16 per cent below the 1929 peak.

* * *

What happened during the crisis of 1937-38 is seen from the columns giving the low point of this crisis, its date, and the percentage this low point was of the 1937 high. The decline in economic activities was one of the most precipitous in American economic history. *The Annalist* index tumbled down from 111.0 to 73.8, that is, to 66 per cent of the 1937 high point (a drop of about one-third). All this happened in the course of nine months. The dates in the table show how little time it took for the crisis to develop and reach the bottom. The percentage column brings out the severity of the decline. The decline in various production series ranged from 28 per cent up to 84 per cent. Unemployment went up 52 per cent. Payrolls in manufacturing industries declined 38 per cent, while the cost of living went down only 4 per cent. Department store sales declined 64 per cent.

The last two columns of the table show how all these series stood at the most recent date for which data are available—in November, 1938. Although, with a few exceptions, they show a marked improvement over conditions prevailing during the earlier part of 1938, the level attained is still considerably below the peak of 1937. We note that *The Annalist* index rose to 95, which was still 14 per cent below its high point prior to the 1937 crisis.

Characteristic of the present situation is the fact that improvement is uneven in the various series. The very last column of the table shows how the present position compares with the pre-crisis peak in 1937. *The Annalist* index is 14 per cent below. The index of industrial production, which had declined in June, 1938, to 77, a drop of over a third from May, 1937, its highest point since 1929, stood in November at 104. In other words, it recovered 27 points but was still 18 points, or 15 per cent, below the 1937 peak.

Construction, measured by value of contracts awarded, showed a marked improvement. Although in November it was below the 1937 peak, due to the seasonal nature of construction industry, it was well above it in October. This improvement is no doubt due to the financing of construction by governmental subsidies. (See L.R.A.'s *Economic Notes,* January, 1939.) However, even the October level was but about 54 per cent of the peak prior to the 1929 crisis.

The sensitive indexes such as machine tools, steel ingots, iron and steel, and the highly seasonal series such as freight-car loadings and automobile production, have all picked up markedly from their respective low points; but they are still considerably below the 1937 peak.

On the other hand, the index of wholesale prices, which reached 78 in August, 1938, a decline of 10 points from the 1937 peak, still remains

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about the same level, indicating that stocks of accumulated goods are still large.

Unemployment in the United States continues to remain at a high level and in November it rose over October, indicating that the influx of new workers is greater than the absorption of unemployed by industry.

Foreign trade is still considerably below its 1937 high point and only about 45 per cent of the 1929 peak. Payrolls in manufacturing industry are 24 per cent below their 1937 peak, while the cost of living is only 3 per cent below.

The farm situation is also a factor casting a shadow on recovery prospects. Cash income of farmers for 1938 was estimated at about $7,625,000,000 compared with $8,600,000,000 the preceding year. The buying power of farm produce has also fallen below a year ago. In November a decline in this index of 7 per cent below the previous November was registered by the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

After the 1929 crash, the economic curve was not one of continuous decline, but was interrupted by several temporary improvements. The improvement in business activity since the middle of 1938, following upon the precipitous decline in the latter part of 1937 and first half of 1938, has been continuous and relatively strong, up to the last month for which data were available at the time of this writing.

However, in view of the deepening general crisis of capitalism, manifested particularly by the raging flames of war in several parts of the world and the unsettled international situation dominated by the threat of further fascist aggression, the recent improvement must be considered of too short duration, too uncertain and uneven to justify the conclusion that there has been a basic shift for the better presaging a sustained rise in business activity. A slowing down of production or a pause in the recent upturn may be in prospect for the months immediately ahead.

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FROM THE WORLD COMMUNIST PRESS

FROM "AN ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION"

BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GERMANY

Die Rote Fahne, central organ of the Communist Party of Germany, 1938, No. 6.

IN OUR *legal agitation,* especially among the masses influenced by fascism, we must "catch Hitler up" on his peace demagogy, his protestations of peace to all states (the Sportspalast speech), his declaration that Germany has no more territorial demands in Europe. We must develop a wide mass discussion of such slogans and demands as are sketched briefly here:

1. "Peace?" Then stop the feverish war economy and armament, which disastrously undermine the national economy and standards of living. Demobilize. Stop the construction of fortifications. Put an end to forced labor.

2. Put industry on the basis of production for peace. Instead of squandering wealth on armaments and fortifications, produce for export, import raw materials necessary for consumers' goods, food; build dwellings; supply the trades with genuine materials.

3. Use the means and materials thus freed for social improvements. Stop speed-up and disgraceful wages. Raise wages in all industries and return to the eight-hour day.

Equal wages for equal work for employed women.

Prohibition of piece-work and overtime for workers under the age of eighteen.

No more collections, forced contributions and assessments.

Set aside sums for unemployment insurance.

Cut down the contributions to the Labor Front.

4. Distribute the provisions hoarded by Goering! Fats and butter instead of cannon!

5. Reduce the exorbitant taxes on the masses. Tax the armament profiteers.

6. Drop the economic policy of coercing the peasants. Establish free marketing. Issue permits for importing stock feed; establish credits for reimbursement for the replacement of livestock lost by disease. Stop the forcible collection of taxes.

Stop the destruction of thousands of acres of farm land for war purposes.

In answer to Hitler's preachment of "the right of self-determination" and of "liberation," demand:

The right of self-determination for the German people!

The right of self-determination for the Austrian people!

Free election of delegates and representatives in industry, in every organization, in every community; free and secret balloting for popular representation on a nationwide scale.

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Freedom of assembly, speech and press.

Freedom of religion and conscience.

Release the political prisoners from jails, prisons and concentration camps.

Free Thaelmann, Mierendorf, Rossaint, Niemoeller and all who fight for freedom and peace!

These slogans and demands must be popularized in the factories, in the mass organizations, on all possible occasions and in all possible forms, for instance, in discussions of the speeches of Nazi leaders, of articles in Nazi newspapers, by "the whisper press," by writing on walls, sidewalks, by leaflets and pamphlets.

"The Communist Party is the party of the working class. Its theory is founded upon the role of the working class in uniting and leading the masses of the people; it draws its main strength from the ranks of the working class. But our Party also draws into itself the best from all strata of society, regardless of their class, and gives them that which their own class cannot—a conscious and fruitful collaboration in the further progress of the human race. The bearers and defenders of culture, from all classes, are being drawn into or under the influence of the Party of Marxism-Leninism, as inevitably as iron filings are drawn to a magnet."—Earl Browder, *Theory As a Guide to Action.*

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BOOK REVIEWS

FACTS FOR LABOR

LABOR FACT BOOK, VOL. IV, prepared by the Labor Research Association, 224 pages, International Publishers, New York, $1.00.

THE Labor Research Association is to be heartily commended for the publication of the fourth, and thus far best, of its series of Labor Fact Books. When a definitive history of the decade of the 1930's is written, the Labor Fact Books will be an indispensable source on life and labor in this turbulent period. This volume is an invaluable compendium of information for all those whose activities and interests are bound up with political and social movements. It assembles in compact and accessible form the most important developments in the period from 1936 to 1938 in the United States and abroad, and provides the basic statistical facts which implement the Marxian analysis of contemporary social problems.

Among the varied subjects comprehensively treated in the nine chapters of the book are the factors leading from the recovery movement to the 1937-38 crisis, trends in the labor movement on both the trade union and political fronts, farm problems, the fight against the infringement of civil rights, and the struggle for peace.

In its well-documented discussion of the depression, the Labor Research Association finds it impossible to measure statistically the exact extent to which the sabotage of big business may have hastened its coming. Yet ample material is marshalled to reinforce the position developed in the analysis of Comrade Bittelman, and held by advanced New Dealers, that monopoly capital pursued a conscious policy of sabotage as a concrete expression of their struggle against the liberal policies of the New Deal.

The editors of the Fact Book point out that in the period treated there occurred "a political realignment of tremendous significance." They record the notable achievements of progressive labor action on the political field by such state organizations as the Washington Commonwealth Federation, and nationally by Labor's Non-Partisan League.

Abundant evidence of the achievement of unity in action by the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. is shown by the record of election victories and by the joint support given progressive candidates and progressive labor legislation. On the other hand, the shocking record of the splitting actions by leaders of the A. F. of L. Executive Council gives warning of the disastrous results of this policy, and the need for redoubled efforts for labor unity. It is regrettable that the Fact Book was on the press before the election and was therefore unable to complete the picture of labor's political activity for this period with an analysis of the 1938 election results.

One of the outstanding developments of the period covered by this volume is the work of the National Labor Relations Board. The Fact Book ably describes the provisions of the Wagner Act, and how the National Labor Relations Board has administered and settled its many cases. Many unions throughout the country will find especially valuable the procedure in filing claims and the decisions made in outstanding cases, which establish precedents for the interpretation of the provisions of the act. The full account given of employers' opposition to the act provides the necessary understanding for the struggle facing progressives in the 1939 Congress to prevent reactionary changes in the act.

The editors of the Fact Book estimate the number of unemployed at about 16,000,000, including those on work relief rolls. We find here a more satisfactory and complete picture of the unemployment situation than is available in the National Census on Unemployment. Important data are given on the relief situation and on the role of the Workers Alliance in maintaining and extending

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the provision of relief to the unemployed. Here, as in other chapters of the volume, the Labor Fact Book contributes to an understanding of social developments by its methods of relating the facts and statistics of a situation with the activities of those organizations which provide leadership to effect progressive changes.

The material on family income which effectively describes the maldistribution of wealth and income in the United States would have been strengthened by the use of the recent National Resources Committee Report on *Consumers Income in the United States,* but this report was unfortunately not available until after the Fact Book went to press. Some of the preliminary material for this report was used, however, in the excellently documented chapters on Farmers and Farm Workers. Likewise, in view of the widespread interest among progressive groups in expanding health services for the masses, it would have been desirable to include in the section on public health more of the material on the President's program which led to the National Health Conference.

Among the most effective sections of the volume are the discussions on labor abroad and on trade unions in the U. S. with the valuable table of unions and of strike struggles in 1936-37. The interesting presentation of arguments against incorporation of trade unions and the text of the Mohawk Valley formula should become part of the arsenal of every trade unionist and of those interested in labor's welfare.

Although the book contains a good deal on the rise of reaction in the last two years, the special significance of this tendency as manifesting the fascist offensive in this period is not dealt with in the present volume. This is to be regretted. It is probably explained by the fact that this tendency was emphasized in the previous Fact Book and perhaps also by the space limitations of the present volume. It is to be hoped that the topic of fascism and fascist formations will be given the full treatment it deserves in the next volume.

This important handbook can be recommended without reserve for use by all who are active in progressive organizations and require ready, carefully documented material for speeches, articles and pamphlets. The next volume should further enhance its value for these purposes by including a bibliography of books and pamphlets as well as articles in periodicals, pertinent to each section in order to supplement the resources referred to in the text, and thus enable further research.

CHARLOTTE TODES.

ERRATUM

In the article "The Democratic Front and the Northwest Elections," by Morris Raport, which appeared in the January issue of THE COMMUNIST, a typographical error occurred on page 74, line 2. The text should read: "Leftist errors which might alienate . . .—*The Editors.*

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